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All One Wicca

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All One Wicca

A Study in The Universal
Eclectic Tradition of Wicca

(Revised and Expanded)

Kaatryn MacMorgan

Writers Club Press

San Jose New York Lincoln Shanghai

All One Wicca
A Study in The Universal Eclectic Tradition of Wicca
(Revised and Expanded)

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Writers Club Press
an imprint of iUniverse.com, Inc.

For information address:
iUniverse.com, Inc.
5220 S 16th, Ste. 200
Lincoln, NE 68512
www.iuniverse.com

ISBN: 0-595-20273-X

Printed in the United States of America

*For Apollo, Phoenix, Logan, the wonderful people at
beliefnet.com who know me as "Windsinger" and the
members of Coven of the Far Flung Net. He who
shows love is blessed.*

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Foreword

All One Wicca into the 21st century

All One Wicca began its journey in 1993, the work of a novice priestess in a religion that was just beginning to catch on with the public. When it was first marketed to publishers, many of them had never even heard of Wicca. Respected publishers that have since published grand works on Wicca sent lovely letters of rejection, stating flatly that the religion was too obscure to attract any readers, or that the book would be better published by a specialty house. Specialty houses called it too specific or too scholarly, or argued that the author's first page contention, "This is not New Age," rendered it impossible to publish by their organization.

In January of 2001, *All One Wicca*, now available in a free, online edition, began its sixth year as one of the most read unpublished manuscripts in existence, garnering a respectable 80 new hits a day at its website, <http://book.cuew.org>. Browsers were encouraged to report typos, dispute information, and share their opinions. As a result, the editorial staff of *All One Wicca* numbers in the thousands.

This revised and expanded edition of *All One Wicca* was specially prepared for the on-demand and e-publishing market, and includes almost 50 pages of content not available at the website. Fans of the free edition will find the quality and depth of information the website offers maintained in this format, with clarification and more in-depth

detail of some of the subjects glossed over in the original work and new issues not previously discussed.

Introduction

What is Wicca?

Wicca is a religion based on the indigenous beliefs of the ancient peoples of Europe. Like all religions, Wicca is a set of mores and a relationship with the Divine. It did not develop in a straight line from indigenous beliefs, but rather has a long, tangled history with roots in the British spiritualist movements of the late nineteenth century. It owes its lineage to Thelema, Theosophy, Buddhism, Egyptology, Greek and Roman mythology, Celtic romanticism and fiction and fact about the pre-Christian world of Europe. Wicca is not the modern practice of the ancient religion of one group of people, instead, it combines portions of many different religious beliefs from many different European tribes with many of the rational ideas that have evolved in the past two hundred years.

Despite its ancient roots, Wicca is a modern creation, a religion of an information culture, requiring that its members be gifted with the skill of telling myth from history and fact from metaphor. Many Wiccans speak in myth and in metaphor of the roots of their religion, fostering the concept of a mystery faith. The dedicant, the initiate and the scholar know Wicca to be modern, while acknowledging the power and appeal of the stories claiming it as the oldest faith known to man.

Wicca is new, but not "New Age". While many Wiccans practice the arts of the New Age movement, like tarot and crystallo-mancy, Wicca

itself is neither New Age nor an art. Many Wiccans also practice medicine, football and ceremonial magick. The presence of Wiccans in these fields does not magically elevate Wicca to the status of medical science, sport, or metaphysical system. It is only Wiccan practitioners of New Age arts that are "New Agers," the rest of us are students, mothers, scholars, authors and a thousands of other epithets we pick up by living life as best we can.

The mythical 'New Age' of fundamentalist fret, where militant lesbian vegans rule over enslaved men or Crowley-esque sorcerers work through role-playing games to get inside children's minds, does not exist. It was made up to frighten people, but frightening is harming, and Wiccans strive to harm none. We have no hidden agendas, no schemes, no secret societies and no passwords...our secrets are open for all who have eyes to see. We are normal citizens, your children, parents, neighbors, teachers and friends, no more or less evil or scheming than anyone...maybe even a little nicer, a little saner, a little more polite.

I know there are a few misguided Wiccan souls out there with delusions of grandeur or who are in serious need of attitude adjustments, I've encountered them myself, but personality and insanity transcend religion, because, as the sages say, "there's one in every bunch." The vast majority of us are not stereotypes or Hollywood images, but normal people who follow a minority religion. At times, we must be loud and shout about our rights, disruptive when they are trampled, aggressive when they are threatened, but for the most part we are a peaceful people.

As our faith has grown, we've had problems with people refusing to allow us our basic rights as a religion. In North Carolina, when a young Wiccan's family asked for balance in a secular, public school's choral concert in which six of the nine songs were devoutly Christian, that Wiccan and her parents were heckled and taunted by the so-called "adults" of their community until the girl fled in tears. In Florida, a man who has asked for years for an end to Christian-exclusive Prayers at school meetings was "whacked" on the head by a clipboard by a Christian school board member as he was ejected from a meeting.

Students in high schools and colleges wearing pentacles, one of the symbols of our faith, have been suspended for wearing them in schools where students wear crosses and Magen David freely. Senator Bob Barr attempted (and thankfully failed) to limit the ability of Wiccans to practice their faith on military bases. Wiccan gatherings on private property have been disrupted by ignorant groups of people representing dangerous offshoots of Christianity, and Wiccans have been shot at, threatened and generally harassed by these people. Perhaps in this Pseudo-Christianity's worst attack on us, a 13 year old Wiccan girl in Detroit, supported wholeheartedly in her faith at home, was attacked daily by a mob of toughs chanting Christian hymns and telling her she was going to hell, put an end to her life to make them stop when her family was ineffective at putting an end to it and school officials turned their back on her.

At the same time, some Wiccans have created problems for themselves. Being Wiccan does not, for example, allow you to wander around nude on public properties where it is prohibited, or carry knives in prison. Being Wiccan does not mean that you may wear your pentacle jewelry in schools in which no jewelry at all is allowed, or that you can practice despite your parent's objections or behind their backs. Wicca itself is not an excuse to be a jerk, or to attack Christians for their beliefs, no matter what the other Christians have done to you. Wicca, as a religion, is not racist, religiocentric or abusive. There are Wiccans who are, however, just as every faith has those that the true members of that faith can only wish would go away.

I've attempted to include most of the shared beliefs of Wiccans here for you to see. That's it. No secrets. Obviously I haven't included in depth detail about every ritual...that's insane, I couldn't create a disk or book large enough to fill with everything about Wicca. These sins of omission are not attempts to hide or miseducate, just factors of a limited medium.

Like the Abrahamic religions and other world faiths, Wicca is a religion that is divided into sects. Just as the sects within the Abrahamic paradigm range from vastly differing broad groupings (i.e.: Jewish,

Muslim, Catholic, Protestant) to the individual or small sects of various temples and churches (Hassidim, Sufi, Wesleyan, Seventh-Day Adventists, Southern Baptist, etc.), the sects of Wicca, called "traditions¹" (or "trads") are diverse. A tradition usually includes family and personal beliefs, passed down through the years, or the beliefs and values of a group of people. Most Wiccan traditions fall into one of five categories, although borrowing between trads is fairly typical. These categories are Gardnerian based, Dianic based, Eclectic, Reconstructionist and Fam-Trad, the shorthand name for "family-traditions" practices that date back over several generations of a family.

Gardnerian traditions and those traditions which have sprung out of Gardnerian traditions are based on the books of and practices detailed by Gerald Gardner, but the term "Gardnerian Tradition" also applies to many Fam-Trads which pre-date Gardner and seem similar to those practices described by him. Most modern "Gardnerians" actually practice an eclectic amalgam of inflexible early twentieth-century Wiccan beliefs from Europe, incorporating various Fam-Trads in their quest for the "Original" Wicca. The oldest proof of a pre-Gardnerian tradition mentioned in this book, the Marchand Fam-Trad, dates (at least) to 1930, but has only considered itself "Wiccan" since the seventies. This is typical of the older trads, many of which have changed to fit a Wiccan mold in the past fifty years.

Dianic Traditions are usually feminist, placing the Goddess above the God in importance. Dianic traditions are more common on the west coast of the United States, and are usually divided into two groups: Dianic Wiccans (those accepting the God and Goddess) and Dianic Pagans (monotheistic Pagans worshipping only a Goddess.) On the East Coast, Gardnerian-based practitioners outnumber Dianics substantially, but in the past 20 years, the number of Wiccans considering themselves Eclectics and Reconstructionists has increased all over the United States.

Eclectic Traditions use a broad framework of traditional and historical practices wrapped around a core of beliefs regarding how the world works. Reconstructionists also use a core of beliefs, but restrict

their study of historical and traditional practices to one culture or family. Reconstructionists range from Wiccan Reconstructionists, who seek to practice the religion of Modern Wicca within a cultural framework, such as Celtic or Hellenistic Wiccans, to pure cultural Reconstructionists, who reject the Wiccan beliefs for resurrected or reconstructed religions of Ancient Greece, Rome, Ireland, and elsewhere.

Fam-Trads range from the well known to the obscure. Some are strict, like the Marchand trad, which has an epic poem that details both the history of the family and the rules of ritual in explicit detail. Some, like the Tomas Family Tradition, have no written rules and consist of the teachings of one person's lifetime. The history and size of a tradition doesn't matter in Wicca, although it can feel nice to have a huge group of colleagues and a stack of books to refer to. Some trads claim lineages thousands of years old and some are being created right now, but the beauty of Wicca is that neither age nor numbers lend legitimacy to the practioners of a tradition, their actions do. For this reason, size, which can mean the difference between a cult and a "real" church in Christianity and other faiths, doesn't matter in Wicca. Some traditions consist of only one or two individuals, and the largest have thousands. In Wicca, it is the shared beliefs, not their age or the number of believers, which make a tradition.

Universal Eclectic Wicca, which this book is about, is a broad-based Eclectic tradition, originally created to bring together the followers of several different groups whose leaders had learned from the same training circle. Although none of our covens were alike, we decided to craft a "tradition" encompassing all of our beliefs. UEW is the result of that work.

To the Skeptic, reading with the purpose of ridicule or damnation, I ask you to remember that this is not some freak cult...this is our religion, respect it as you respect your own, for our beliefs are as deeply held. I charge the Christian skeptic to read Matthew 7:1: "Judge not" and bide by it.

To the traditionalist, the Wiccan who says, "No, It must be done this way," I say "Grow" our similarities outweigh our differences. This may not be YOUR tradition. I never said it was.

To all, I challenge you with our Affirmation of Acknowledgment, the first piece of UEW writing any student learns. It stands as a testimony of our intent to practice our faith for ourselves, while allowing others to practice their faiths unhindered:

The Affirmation of Acknowledgment:

I: I acknowledge the presence of other faiths² on my planet, indeed, right here in my city/town/village. I acknowledge that the followers of these faiths feel as strongly, maybe more so, than I do about mine.

II: I forgive the other faiths and wipe clean the slate between us. I cannot hold a person responsible for the acts of their faith; I cannot hold a faith at fault for individual practitioners. It is not my place to convert, or otherwise alter a person's religion. I invite discussion of beliefs without judgment of those holding them.

III: I acknowledge that I may be wrong, and I have found comfort in the fact that I may be right.

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Book One:

The Religion

Disclaimer: Throughout this work I mention numerous types of Magickal and Religious people, ranging from Mages to Seventh-day Adventists. This should by no means be considered a validation of these faiths and beliefs. I make no claim of mastery of these faiths or practices. While I have dabbled and meandered from Angelic Magick to Zen Buddhism, from Plato to Crowley to Cunningham and back again, I am a Priestess of Universal Eclectic Wicca.

Chapter One

Achieving the First Circle

Universal Eclectic Wicca, as the name suggests, is an eclectic tradition. Webster's New World dictionary defines eclectic as "selecting or selected from various sources." UEW is based on not one or two sources but an infinite number of sources, allowing the student to use any source he or she finds useful, provided the context of the source is taken into consideration and respected. Much as the "Witch-Cult" described in Gerald Gardner's *Witchcraft Today* grew and changed with the addition and subtraction of various people throughout the British Isles, our modern Wicca, fueled by the rapid changes of the communication age, grows and changes with the people we meet through networking and a free press.

Could Gardner, or a more recent author, have predicted the ritual on Gallows Hill in Salem, Massachusetts in 1992, where Pagans of every creed and color marched to honor those persecuted in the name of religion? Could the indigenous shamans of the Americas have predicted the thousands of non-native seekers abandoning their "European ways" to seek the spirits of the land? Could any of us have predicted the vast Pagan community of the Internet or the explosion of Paganism's popularity with young teens?

In order to accept the changes that thousands of new seekers have brought to Wicca, we must make the realization that no one was born

without the ability to contribute to humankind, that each life, no matter how insignificant, creates some small change. Humankind without change is an ugly thought, indeed. An old bardic law includes the phrase "ever changing, ever learning, ever growing," and that is our modern Wicca. We live in a beautiful time, for all its strife and hardship, and the pace of change is always growing. As children, my grandparents had no television; my mother (despite her dependency on it now) had no computer...I cannot comprehend my life without either. Who knows what my son will have at my age?

The changing nature of the world calls for flexibility, not just cultural flexibility, but spiritual flexibility. Religion that is static ceases to be religion and becomes something frightening, so we must be constantly vigilant in our preservation of our open-mindedness. We must accept the positive changes, and when faced with negative ones, adapt them to positive ends. Most of all, we have to not fear them. Fear of change is the greatest cause of persecution in our history, especially the history of North America, the cradle of modern Eclectic Wicca.

From the Zapatistas to the Inuit, the makeup of this entire continent is a list of the oppressed. Many of the first settlers were escaping persecution when they came here and dished it out to the indigenous people and others by the shovel full, claiming the entire time to be protecting their faith. Many have found their religions focusing not on their god(s), but on their persecutors, and entire sects of religions talk of nothing but "not letting 'em get to us," and spend hours weekly trying to prevent change. The most frustrating aspect of this fear of change is that it is often more consuming within the groups who face the least persecution, the professional white male, and his affluent suburban Christian community. Contact with harsh world of the underprivileged seems to give those persecuted daily better things to do than worry about conspiracies or form militias. Those currently persecuted can only look at those who have fallen and try to be stronger, focusing, not on the past, but on the future and the change it promises.

When no longer persecuted, churches and faith groups must change or face becoming focused exclusively on the past. If they fail to change, walls of fear and misunderstanding can rise up, cutting the faith and its practioners off from reality and allowing insane, corrupt or downright evil leaders to run their lives. From Jim Jones to the Televangelists that bilk senior citizens out of everything they own, it is a scenario that replays itself every few years. Careers, lives, even souls are destroyed in moments while we just shake our heads and mourn more "freaks" who have followed a leader we don't understand.

"It is an 'Us' and 'Them' and anyone who isn't with the church is against it," a former fundamentalist told me of her experience, shortly after leaving such a church. "We're no longer a church, but a set of issues...if you're not anti-gay, anti-choice and anti-woman, you are not welcome." This same person noted a frightening trend: "Not once were the teachings of Christ not attached to the church's political agenda. We were buffeted with tales of the past, and how everything is corrupted now." "That wasn't a church," she added, "That was a conspiracy cult."³

The perceived persecution, at worst, can become real persecution. There is a metaphysical law that states: "Belief creates Reality." Nowhere does it come into effect more visibly than when the cycle of persecutor and persecuted becomes continuous. Take the example of David Koresh's Branch Davidians: Thinking themselves persecuted they began to prepare for a "war." Their preparations led to their persecution, and then their war happened. The force of belief is very powerful.

To prevent becoming another conspiracy cult, Wicca (or any religion) must be eclectic, and accept from all of its members while maintaining a high level of determination to not become the persecutors. One need only hang out in a Pagan chat room for a short while to see a Wiccan who this concept is lost upon. That there are anti-Christian Wiccans is a sorry fact of our culture, many Wiccans are ex-Christians, and often there is nothing so obsessed about a religion as its former members. Hopefully, the day will not come when people focused on hating their old faith instead of practicing their new one are the majority, but we

must all remain vigilant against these “haters” and teach them the path of love.

At a friend’s handfasting (a Wiccan marriage ceremony), the High Priestess passed around a chalice made of a wineglass covered in soft, unfired polymer clay. As we passed the glass around, our fingers touched the clay, leaving a myriad of fingerprints, and other marks. The Priestess fired the clay during the reception, and as the last gift, gave them the chalice. “Everyone who touched your ceremony touched this,” she told the couple, “and this is to remind you not only of those who touched your ceremony, but of the millions who touch your life, mostly with fingerprints you’ll never see.”

Wicca is much like that chalice, with a fingerprint appearing for everyone who touches it. Many of the fingerprints are small, and hardly noticeable, a few are strong, and firm, their owners easily identified. In some places, people have made their mark on Wicca by pulling at the clay, or scratching their initials in it. These people serve as a reminder to be selective in who we trust. The Priestess did not simply leave the chalice out for anyone to touch, but gave it lovingly to friends, family and caring bystanders.

Unfortunately, with a religion, we can’t give the faith to those we know alone. New people come into Wicca everyday, from many different backgrounds. As Wiccans, we have to work around the gouges in the clay some of them leave behind. We need to remember that if the public meets only one of a group, it is that person who the group is judged by. Certainly the marks of Scott Cunningham and the like do Wicca a great honor when used as examples, but negative examples exist. As Wiccans defending our faith, it’s our job to note these negative examples, and learn from them, while providing good examples ourselves. It’s not always easy.

Many people believe that Modern Wicca, in its earliest incarnation, was created by Aleister Crowley. Even Gardner, in the aforementioned work, acknowledges that possibility, while proposing the idea that Crowley learned from Witchcraft.⁴ No good interpretation of the works of Crowley is complete without at least an overview of the writings of

the founders of early Modern Wicca. Similarly, an understanding of early twentieth century Wiccan authors is only reached by understanding the paradigm created by Crowley and his contemporaries. Unfortunately, an uninformed overview of Crowley can create wild ideas in those searching for a way to condemn Wicca. Certainly his philosophical fingerprint was apparent on the chalice of Wicca when a Northern New York Christian Activist referred to Wiccans as "Followers of the dark Magician Crowley who claimed to be Satan himself."⁵

Caution, therefore, is the guideword in our Eclecticism, what we include reflects what we are. This does not negate the importance of Eclecticism, but a religion comprised of someone else's rules and rites falls into inevitable decline. We must be inclusive and warm, just as the ancient peoples who practiced the foundations of Modern Wicca were. Like them, we must welcome and process new ideas while maintaining the old, and incorporate new information and technologies into our practice without forgetting their roots.

Eclecticism in Wicca is not, as some traditionalists have claimed, a loss of our ancestral history as Wiccans, but a celebration of the History we are making now as humans. By embracing Eclecticism, we are merely doing what was done before...improving. The earliest Witches did it, the wise woman, shaman and druid. In a natural religion, eclecticism and evolution are unavoidable. It is not our way to fight nature.

* * *

As I walked into a class he was teaching, a friend and metaphysical scholar had written the following in a bold hand across a wall of blackboards in a run down high school. The students, waiting for a question and answer session on Wicca, read:

Contemplate the following statements:

1. Matter exists in every galaxy it is universal.
2. Air is a need we all share it is universal.
3. That screwdriver works on all screws it is universal.⁶

Three meanings, one word, this isn't that uncommon in the English language. Universal means ever-present, everywhere, throughout the universe. It also means the Entirety, everything that was, is or will be. It also means usable by and for everything.

Wicca conforms to all of these definitions. It is ever-present, if we could travel to any location, at any point in time, Wicca, that is, the laws and beliefs that comprise Wicca, would still be in effect. Obviously the ethics would differ from situation to situation, but the basic religion would stay the same. Wicca is not limited by one's location.

At the same time, Wicca encompasses The All, and The All is encompassed in Wicca. Unlike many faiths, we do not believe the soul has a part of divinity that is separate from our body and mind. While philosophers like Plato taught that the divinity manifested by the unity of the various parts of the Psyche/Soul was a state to be achieved ⁷, we teach that total integration is there from the start, giving us unlimited power, control of our own destiny and the Will to do anything, best described in the catchphrase from Robert Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* coined by The Church of All Worlds:

"Thou art God"⁸

We are God(dess). This does not mean we are not human, or better, only that divinity, with all its meanings, is within us, a part of us. In Wicca, this is sometimes called Manifest Divinity, and means that everything is divine. Each moment in life is viewed spiritually, so each ordinary thing becomes a lesson, with work, the littlest things have huge revelations, as shown in this humorous tidbit I wrote a few years ago for my newsletter, *The Green*:⁹

The Donut

Inspiration comes from strange places, in this case, a donut.

Not just any donut, but a plain donut...lonely, boring, brown, tasteless, perfectly normal and sitting there in a box that started out with nine, three cinnamon, three sugared, and three plain.

For two weeks, this donut sat alone in a box at my lover's parent's house, unwanted and unattended. When it disappeared, box and all, I was too embarrassed to ask where it had gone, so I didn't, just let it lay, and thought on it. You know, I felt sorry for that donut, deprived of a sweet coating, it dried out, aged, and was thrown away, just because it wasn't special.

That donut was like humankind, like too many people who brush up against the cinnamons, sugared and chocolate glazed to get a sparkle of difference, a dusting of significance, or, worse yet, they gaze up at heaven waiting for some celestial custard filling, or Raspberry Cream, or Dutch Apple Mousse to make them different, special, *important*.

You know, there is a beauty in a plain donut.

There is no distinction made between the spiritual and the physical...Everything is divine, a lesson. Everything is Wicca, even a donut, no matter how stale. I like to call this kind of perception "revelation in the irrelevant." It begins with the conscious decision to learn something from the most meaningless stimuli. It starts as a mental workout, but before long, the lessons come with no work at all.

The universality of Wicca also means that Wicca can be used by all and anything can be used in Wicca. As long as the Five Points of Wiccan Belief are there, and the other basic beliefs are met, any religion can be called "Wiccan," there is Wiccan Druidry, Wiccan Judaism, even Wiccan Christianity.

The laws of Wicca are relevant to ALL religions, and all aspects of life. This is because the laws of Wicca are not commandments or the subjective rules of a deity, but the rules you can recognize just by looking around you. Those laws that are metaphorical, such as the Law of Return, when proven by physics such as "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction," or laws of natural science with extraordinary proofs, are

said to be metaphysical. Metaphysical laws can be proven, with experimentation, as surely as can gravity.

Lastly, universality also means that we are all, Dianic, Gardnerian, Eclectic or what-have-you, practicing the same thing, Wicca...All One Wicca. This does not mean that each tradition is unimportant, only that all traditions are equally as important, whether comprised of one, or one hundred members.

Rather than divide our members into Solitary and Coven Practitioners, in Universal Eclectic Wicca, we have what are called Circles. These circles don't measure how many people you practice with, but represent two things: How much you know about Wicca and How much time and effort you put into your religion, the community, and your "learning quest." (The learning you have already done probably places you within a circle, but small projects are asked of students wishing to switch into Universal Eclectic Wicca. These are usually papers, or debates, or in-depth conversations to determine how much you know.) The variances in your beliefs and the next Wiccan's beliefs are vitally important so don't...**do not** try to think like the next guy. Begin to let your philosophies wander, if you create something that isn't Wiccan, oh well, our loss. Being "Wiccan" is not the goal here, being human, and being good at it, is.

All religions, regardless of the inspiration behind them, are created by humankind. Your religion is your religion, and mine is mine. We may use the same words, rituals, etc., but unless every way you think is the same as mine, our religions are individual. All religion is limited to one practitioner, even if we call the practitioners of similar religions by the same name, Kat MacMorgan's personal Wicca is not Tamryn's Wicca, or Lady Diana's Wicca, or John Q. Pagan's Wicca, it is the religious belief within her soul, much of which cannot be expressed in words. This fierce individuality is reflected strongest by our deity concepts, our worship of Gaea, or Diana, or Apollo. Although we may even call a God or Goddess by the same name, how can I know exactly what (s) he looks like to you? The faces of the gods are shown differently to each person, and the same name, and even the same image is

different from one person to another. This is a perceptual dilemma, like using words to describe colors. We know that blue is the color of something, but how do we know that my brain doesn't see blue things as a color you'd call red? How do you explain blue to a blind person...YOU don't, you just know it is blue. Perception is never identical, although the level of perception may be. My god may be female, or blond, or dark skinned, or called "Jayne Dough," but it's my inner god, and my inner religion, and it doesn't need to mean anything to you. It's okay to follow the god voice inside, even holy to do so. I would contend it is blasphemous to do anything except listen to the voice inside of your soul, and that trying to learn to hear it is the most sacred occupation a person can take up.

A few may feel strongly that the Gods have only one name, and one face, and as a priestess, but mostly as a Metaphysicist I believe that a great "oneness" is not a completely illogical belief. However, human beings are limited in their ability to perceive things by the dimensions they exist within. We can only comprehend those things with length, width, depth and time and our linear temporal existence (meaning that we move only one way in time in these bodies, forward, without the ability to go backwards or in circles) limits what we know of time. Thus, beings of more than these four dimensions would be impossible to grasp in their terms, and our own inadequacies would be filled by our imaginations, creating our personal names and faces of God(s).

The gods are no more upset by our inability to perceive their Entirety than one is by a blind person perceiving without sight. It is simply lack of a sense, a fault of our species. We can work to better understand the gods (lose the obsession with linear time first) with the senses we do have merely by applying the Hermetic maxim "As Above, So Below." By noting the effects of our works on "lesser" creatures and creations we can glean, to a degree, what is going on upstairs, and I wouldn't put it past the gods to have a hand in assisting us, beginning by placing the divine voice, and curiosity about the universe, inside all of us.

Universalism includes everything in one broad sweep. The religion, its laws, its gods are universal in scope and usage, and our ability to perceive them, as limited (or unlimited) as it is, still reflects an Entirety. In our assembly line culture, it is easy to consider ourselves as unimportant as a single drop of water in an ocean. The Wiccan learns to know better...It only takes one drop to make waves.

* * *

While Universal Eclectic Wicca embraces a person's exploration into his or her own religious paradigm, we must draw a line between what we will accept as part of Wicca and what we won't. These limits to our religious universality are The Five Points of Wiccan Belief. Within them, we can find most of the principles of the various traditions of Wicca. These five ethics are boiled down from many traditions, and exist in almost all forms of Wicca, although the names and parables attached to them change from group to group. Practices that don't uphold these standards are difficult to classify as Wiccan.

The Five Points are:

1. The Wiccan Rede
2. The Law of Return
3. The Ethic of Self-Responsibility
4. The Ethic of Constant Improvement
5. The Ethic of Attunement

The Central belief in Wicca, the Wiccan Rede is the oldest of known ethics, the use of various phrasings of this law in pre-Gardnerian Fam-Trads leads to the conclusion that if there once was, as some claim, a unified pre-Christian Pagan religion, this was a tenet of it. In the nineteen seventies, Lady Gwen Thompson published a numbered faith poem in Green Egg magazine that was attributed to her grandmother and ended with the phrase we know today as The Wiccan Rede. This faith poem, The Rede of the Wicca, is the foundation of a specific tradition of Wicca. When people write of "The Wiccan Rede" they are

rarely speaking of the faith poem, but of this phrase. Which came first is an element of contention among Wiccans to this day, and I will not add to it beyond saying that the codified rules of "Rede of The Wicca" are not held as tenets of many people's Wicca, but the Wiccan Rede is.

The Wiccan Rede consists of eight very carefully chosen words "An it harm none, do as you will." It has become very fashionable, in some circles, to bemoan the meaning of the Rede and how everyone else doesn't follow it, using it to propose everything from the removal of Wiccans from the armed forces to strict veganism, but the truth is that the Rede is not "harm none" but **AN** it harm none, do as you will. "An" is a middle English mutt of a word, descended from one, like our present day "An" but also a word used to mean "if" in Archaic English, as well as "as long as" or "if and only if". Present day variations on the Rede, dropping An replace it with "if" or, in the case of many Hellenistic Wiccans, with "first" or, less often, "primarily."

I divulge into this seemingly pointless etymology with a purpose! When we separate the Rede not into "Harm None" and "do as you will" as some would have you do, but into a streamlined single logic expression, it can become "As long as it harms none, do as you will." This is a far cry from harming none; this is the "first do no harm" of the Hippocratic oath followed by part of the basic metaphysical principle of Thelema—"do as you will". It indicates that a Wiccan knows his True Will and is voluntarily choosing to restrict his actions when they can cause harm. The Rede, read in this way, does not say do no actions that cause harm, but instead says, "Do actions that cause no harm freely." Although failing as the singular statement that sums up all belief some would have the Rede be, as the foundation for further Wiccan belief this works well...If we can do actions that cause no harm freely, what do we "pay" to do those actions that may cause harm?

Before I am seen as a gross moral relativist, let me point out that I believe Wicca teaches us to move through life with minimal harm. As we become more in tune with divinity and ourselves, just believing in harming none fails as a real morality. On a macroscopic level it may work, but looked at closely enough there are times when no action you

take-or don't take-will cause no harm. Do you treat a bacterial infection though it will kill the bacteria? Do you eat tofu though doing so causes the soy plants to suffer? Do you rejoice at being accepted into a college when you know that that means one less seat is available for another would be student?

Clearly belief in not harming another is not the spiritual Band-Aid it appears at first glance, nor is it the black and white spiritual dichotomy of many young Wiccan neophytes. The Rede is just not enough alone, and that's why the rest of the religion exists. I am fond of teaching "Do as you will, if it harm naught, if it harm some, do as you ought." The "ought" is the rest of Wicca, and the purpose behind everything the Wiccan does. Rather than being a completely hands off-spirituality in which one just does whatever they want when they perceive it is ducky with the divine to do so, this "ought" makes it clear that Wiccans ARE held to a higher authority.

The Second of the Five Points is what that authority is all about-The Law of Return. Forget for a moment about your cosmology of choice (you'll find it is to faith like hair color or body type is to personhood-something to recognize a thing by that doesn't have much to do with the actual contents of the thing), forget about gods and goddesses, traditions, faeries, gnomes and woodchucks, forget all of the gold and glitter and things that may've attracted you to Wicca in the first place and strip it down to its core and you get this simple fact:

What you put out comes back to you.

The Law of Return is nothing more or less than the spiritual application of Sir Isaac Newton's Law of Action from the Laws of Motion. Put simply, "Every Action creates a re-action. What you do you get back, push and the universe pushes back. Several traditions add multipliers, they say that what you put out you get back threefold, or sevenfold, others believe that the gods have the time and the inclination to sort positive intent from negative and believe that evil comes back upon you one hundred-fold, while good just "comes back." Regardless of the trappings, whether it is inaccurately called "Karma" or whether it is just called "Lady Fortune," all of these traditions, and

indeed, all faiths when seen from a distance, believe this: Do good and get good, do bad and get bad.

Consider this example, from my own training as a Wiccan.

My eyes were blindfolded, and I was being lead by two of my best friends across a field wet with dew. They hadn't spun me, so I thought that I had one-up on them, sure of where I was going. 10, 20, 30 steps and I heard the barn door swing open. I was right where I was supposed to be, the door to the barn, the cracked cement floor cool beneath my feet in the muggy Upstate New York summer. In the distance, I heard a rumble of thunder; saw the flash of lightning through the blue silk over my eyes.

Dry hands, thin and fragile, feeling like the branches of autumn trees through my tee-shirt, the hands of my teacher and priestess, guided me, my own hands outstretched, to the center of the barn. I was guided to step up a few inches onto a box that was off kilter, and I had to work to maintain a steady footing. My hands were guided out, to where a soft leather surface, rounded, touched my fingertips.

"Push it," my priestess said.

I hesitated. "How should I push it?"

"Push it in whatever manner you see fit."

I leaned back on the box, and with the force of my off kilter balance pushed as hard on the thing as I could. It swung away from me, with a creaking from above. WHOOSH! Something slammed into my upper body from the same direction I had pushed. The strong hands of my coveners grabbed me as I fell backwards, keeping me on the box. I put my hands out and the sphere—a heavy leather medicine ball, came to rest on my fingertips.

My priestess, who I knew was smiling even though I was still blindfolded, came close to my ear. "What did you learn?" she asked.

Rubbing my arms, I snidely whined. "Not to listen when you say 'push'"

She laughed, and helped remove the blindfold. I looked at the medicine ball, suspended by a chain from rafter. She smiled at me. "That is the Law of Return, push the universe and the universe pushes back. Push again"

I gently touched the ball, it came back to rest against my fingers.

"See," she said, "you knew what you were pushing and you didn't push hard enough to lose control of the ball. Now push it hard"

"I'm not gonna push it hard!"

"Just push it Kat, you can see it can't you?"

I pushed the ball hard again. It swung out from me, and curved slightly, as it approached, I avoided it. I caught it on the second swing.

"Why did you move?"

"Because I'm not a moron."

"Why did you stop it the second time and not the first?"

"If I grabbed it the first time it would've knocked me off the box"

"That's the difference between thinking magickally and thinking like a sheep. The Magus ducks the swinging pendulum, as Hermes Trismegistus says, while the sheep just gets knocked around. If you had a choice, push blindfolded or without the blindfold, which would you do?"

"I'd push without it, I'd rather not get hit...and I'd step off the box."

"That's the difference between thinking like a Wiccan and just thinking like a Magus. Your job is not to push the universe unless you know exactly what you are pushing, and why, and you have the best footing you can get. NEVER confuse being Wiccan with using magic"

It took almost ten years for me to really see the logic in the experience above. The Law of Return isn't some mystic, mysterious force that works and we don't know why; it's the inevitable outcome of the laws of Physics. Intention and action are forms of energy, beginning as electro-chemical impulses in the brain and arcing out past the confines of your skull by your actions. Energy can neither be created nor destroyed; only change its appearance...is it so odd then, that energy returns to us when we send it out? Light and sound return to us when we send them out, why wouldn't intent?

A lack of experience with physical and mathematical concepts often leads to the belief that, because good begets good and evil begets evil, evil things happen to people because of something they have done. If a life has been "good," it is assumed that any evil it experiences had to have come from somewhere outside this life, the person was born under a bad sign, or they were a bad person in a past life, or that they chose to have evil happen to them as a "learning experience." It is

from this belief that the Law of Return gets the misnomer the "Karmic Law."

Karma as experienced by Buddhist and Hindu peoples is not similar at all to the way it fits into the Wiccan milieu. Few Wiccans, if any, believe in the caste system inextricably linked to the Hindu reincarnationist belief, so I will focus more on the Buddhist idea of reincarnation that grew from it. The use of the term "Karma" in Wicca got its rise from the earliest writings of the Modern Wiccan movement, a movement that evolved in part from Theosophy. Within Theosophy lies a belief called the "transmigration of souls" which is a synthesis of Western and Buddhist belief. Put simply, the soul moves through stages-lives-in an attempt to grow at one with the universe. At the most fully developed stage outside this oneness one is a "Buddha" capable of bringing the world great wisdom. In Wicca, both the belief that the evil that occurs in ones life as a learning experience and the belief that one is punished for misdeed in the last life arises from Theosophy.

The rational Wiccan, whether a believer in Transmigration of Souls or not, sees each new life as a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate, and shuns all beliefs that smack of predestination. He does not find solace in the belief that the good or evil that occurs in his life is the result of his past actions-rather he faces the perhaps uncomfortable belief that there is a certain level of chaos inherent in the universe. Sometimes bad things happen to bad people because of the bad energy they send out, but occasionally bad things happen to good people for no reason whatsoever.

The Law of Return does not "protect" a person from the inherent chaos of the universe, but it does give one the tools to better deal with the effects of that chaos. In mathematics, we can see that the slightest variation in a system can produce dramatically different results, such as the systems that produce "never the same way twice" fractals, or even the production of water crystals to form a snowflake-a naturally occurring fractal. To the Wiccan, life looks an awful lot like a fractal, with his actions laying a groundwork for their direction, and perhaps

helping direct where it goes at times, but with chaos, not astrology or a past life, being the ultimate *artiste*.

I can already hear cheers from the Erisians and similar followers of lady discord, but I, for one, don't see this chaos power as anything divine or magickal in the slightest, it is a natural law that affects gods, man and animals alike, a sort of divine Magna Carta which the gods created and ended up subject to. This belief in randomness makes holding Wiccan belief that much more honest-that much more honorable-I know that I hold my beliefs, and perform my actions not out of fear of retribution for evil, but because I have made the active decision to be a force for good in the universe.

This belief in doing good for the sake of good leads to the third Point of Wiccan Belief: The Ethic of Self-responsibility. Along with the belief that we are born with a fresh newness uninfluenced by past lives, the position of the stars or anything beyond genetic nature and parental nurture comes the belief that the Wiccan is inherently responsible for himself, the belief that only the individual can be blamed for his actions and the individual must not allow himself to be "led" to take actions that are contrary to his faith. The devil did not make you do it, I did not make you do it, Twinkies didn't make you do it, your commanding officer didn't make you do it: *You made you do it*.

"You made you do it" is the third lesson on Wicca I usually teach my students. Amazingly, about three-quarters of them stay on after hearing it, but a significant minority are so put out by the concept-that YOU made you do it, not some mysterious they, that they run scurrying away in fear. While the Wiccan Rede is the single belief that labels Wiccan groups as "Wiccan" the Ethic of Self-Responsibility is the single belief that labels Wiccan groups as "ethical."

Self-Responsibility stands as a contrast to the biggest flaw in the modern connected culture...eternal, continuous victimhood. Turn on the television during the day, and you will see hundreds of shows dedicated to "poor little me:" the me who is an addict, the me who is was abused, the me who can't go to school because I have five kids and another on the way. The Ethic of Self-Responsibility squashes

these “me”s. No matter whether you are a recovering addict, an abuse survivor, a person who has made bad choices, **You are responsible for yourself and to yourself.**

To one degree, this is the ethic of “you gotta do what you gotta do” if you’re in an abusive relationship, for example, assume that no one will come to save you, not the gods, not your friends, it is up to **you** to get out of or change that relationship by whatever means possible that does the least harm to everyone involved, yourself included. Our culture encourages us to give our responsibility up to a “higher power,” we are told we don’t have control over our emotions, our addictions, our situations, but **we do**. There is no Satan, mysteriously moving you from behind a curtain, there is no id, driving you toward animalistic tendencies, unable to be controlled without the most stringent emotional control, you are not a puppet or plaything of the gods, your sex drive or your genetics. What you are is a human being, to the Ancient Greeks, a dichotomy-not really a god, but not really an animal, having urges that lead him toward fight or flight when stressed, but capable of a million other reactions in the situation.

The Ethic of Self-Responsibility frees you from the culture that leads you to be a victim, to be Wiccan is to make the choice to be responsible for every action, good and bad, when you get an A on a paper, you gave you that A, when you flunk a class, you gave you that F. It can be scary to take this responsibility, to look at your life and see where you’ve blamed your faults on others, but it is the most freeing experience there is.

This idea that a person is responsible for all of their actions results in the belief that life must be used as a learning experience. For some Wiccans, this life is considered a step on the ladder of reincarnation, and a chance to learn that must not be wasted. To Wiccans who do not believe in reincarnation, this life is seen as a precious gift that should not be squandered. Both of these groups believe in the fourth of The Five Points of Wiccan Belief, The Ethic of Constant Improvement. At its heart, constant improvement is growth, the bettering of oneself and the environment by whatever means causes the least harm. It is because of this ethic that many Wiccans are active in the protection of

the environment. For some, environmentalism, what Scott Cunningham calls "Earth Stewardship," is seen as a direct mandate from the creator/ix/s, for others it is seen as the logical step to a reincarnated life in the future (who wants to live in a destroyed environment?) and for others still, acting to protect the environment is the logical outgrowth of the Wiccan Rede. As with other things, many Wiccans see environment on two levels, the immediate microcosmic level and the global level. These Wiccans believe that fixing things often begins at home by trying to raise families in healthy homes that enrich their lives and challenge their soul. Many Wiccans do not teach their children of their religion until they are old enough to take responsibility for their every action, instead choosing to show their child the similarities between the many faiths of the world and what they do to improve their follower's lives. Even without anything resembling the religious indoctrination provided children by other faiths, many of these children choose Wicca nonetheless. Those that don't are loved no less than those that do, and their parents often affirm their right to believe otherwise.

All of these beliefs tie together in The Ethic of Attunement, last of the Five Points and the basis for all of the ritual that Wiccans perform. The Ethic of Attunement is the belief that the Wiccan should attempt to become "in tune" with divinity, his surroundings and himself. How this is done varies from Wiccan to Wiccan. Whether it be the belief that prayer, meditation, and magick need be done to bring one's will closer to that of the divine or merely the act of sitting and observing how the world works that a person does to become into, it's still valid and holy.

To some, the recognition of moon phases, ancestral holy days or the turning of the seasons are vital to attunement, but for others attunement is nothing more than the recognition of the presence of the divine in one's life. Wiccans recognize three basic types of divinity in the universe.

1. The Self is divine.
2. The Gods/other powers are divine.
3. The Universe itself is divine.

The Divine Self (thou art god) is expressed within The Ethic of Self-Responsibility. No one is in control of the Self except for the creator of the Self, the person that "owns" the body. We see ourselves as divine; therefore, we know that we can do anything. Magick becomes possible through faith in the Self, because faith is magical, as detailed in *The Psychology of Religious Experiences* (Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough, 1965):

"The magic of faith—is it religion or magic? The question has broken down into tautology. Faith that we can do the superhuman, such as killing or healing another person by suggestion, gives us power to do what is beyond ordinary human powers. Through faith we do control the uncontrollable—some of it, a little. Where there is faith, there is religion. Not intellectual assent but faith, deep emotional acceptance, makes a Catholic or a Voodooist. Those who have 'lost their faith' often speak of the loss as though they had lost their sight or hearing, a faculty of some sort that made them able to do things to themselves and for themselves which they cannot now do. They are quite right; they have lost a real potency, a real power of control. So I must say that, to call a belief 'superstition', a ritual 'magic', is only to pronounce a value judgment. These are religious beliefs and acts which the person calling them 'superstition' or 'magic' does not like. In calling them so, we are...limiting 'religion' to what we ourselves approve."

Our rites of Attunement to the divine self include the practice of Ritual, and occasionally, High Magick, but also include meditation, dance, drumming and anything else that makes us feel in touch with ourselves.

The Divinity of the Gods, or the "Other Powers" defies immediate explanation, as do the gods themselves. In Wicca, our gods are more like parents, the Divine Father and the Great Mother, and less

like the fury-fueled jealous God of Abraham. Our rites of Attunement to the Gods are nearly all celebratory in nature, with the more intensive rituals combining the divinity of the gods with the divinity of the Universe in worship of the lunar and harvest cycles.

The Divinity of the Universe is subdivided into three groups. In Gaeism, the Planet Earth is a creature and each individual being, plant, animal or mineral is a part of that being, which is usually, but not always, named for the Goddess Gaea or Gaia. In Animism, each thing be it a windstorm or a rock, has a spirit of its own. In Cyclic Totality, or Cyclicism, it is the laws of the Universe that are divine, be they the cycles of celestial decay, or the harvests, or the birth-death-rebirth of the nitrogen cycle.

The combination of these three forms of Universal divinity are used in Wicca in varying degrees with lip service, if not full ritual given to each of the forms.

Beyond these five points, what Wicca *is* is primarily speculative. It is known that the use of the term "Wicca" in its modern form evolved around the time of Gerald Gardner, and, in fact, the current popular usage of the terms "Wiccan" and "Wicca" would probably seem strange to Gardner were he alive today. In truth, the actual roots of Modern Wicca will never be known beyond that it, did, indeed, evolve from the indigenous beliefs of Europeans, especially the beliefs of those in the British Isles and Greece. While it is often kitsch to say that Wicca is "the Old Religion," in fact, Wicca is the New Religion of the Old Gods, an important distinction.

The Five Points of Wiccan Belief, enumerated in this manner, are the basis for Universal Eclectic Wicca, and a project providing "proof" of one's literacy within them is the only requirement expected of a student who wishes to practice within the First Circle. If you wish to use this book as a lesson plan for the First and Second Circles, I suggest that you use a two or three page paper focusing on a current issue as a project before you start. Analyze the issue against the Five Points of Wiccan belief, and ask a sympathetic teacher, fellow Wiccan or friend to read it.

Have the person reading your paper ask the following questions of it:

- Are each of the Five Points mentioned?
- Does the author make his or her point clearly?
- Does the author make judgments based on the points, or merely state the facts of the issue?
- Whether you agree or not, does the author make a good case?
- Does the author show an effective working knowledge of the five points?

In a coven or training circle, the proof of knowledge usually focuses on a few questions asked by a leader and responded to by the student, questions are then asked by the other students, and defense of your point is expected. A paper is often easier than defending to a coven, because coveners and students always seem to find the one or two things you missed thinking about, and catching you off guard.

Once you've mastered these five points, you've achieved the First Circle of UEW. Even if you don't pursue UEW as a tradition, this basic knowledge translates well into nearly every form of Wicca. Remember that no time spent studying your faith is ever wasted.

Chapter Two

Redefining our Spirituality

To the new Wiccan, that is, the vast majority of us who are not born into the religion, a lot of the so-called “simple” terminology had been beaten and burned out of us, their meanings so lost in intolerance that we cannot use them without feeling a least a little betrayed. It is one of our first steps, therefore, to reclaim the terms of our relationship with divinity. “Religion,” “sacred” and “spiritual” all mean more than Christ or “The One God,” but it can be hard for some to realize this.

An easy example is our early teachings. Now, with the exception of a few well-intentioned years in the beginning, I was fortunate enough to go to a public school where the Judeo-Christian beliefs were only slightly pushed, like in the Pledge of Allegiance, and I was allowed to explore the various religions of other cultures. My earliest interests were the Greek Gods, especially Demeter, but they were never listed as a “religion” dead or alive. Everything that wasn’t Judeo-Christian was either “mythology” or “philosophy” and any religion based on those things was either “romantic” or “uncivilized,” and always, always, just plain silly. So for years, while at night I dreamt that a far off Demeter heard my hushed prayers, I beat myself up over it, why was I silly? Why was I childish? How could I glean faith from an Archetype? When I first really began to study Wicca, my teacher said

four words that have held immense importance for me. "Everyone may be right."

Try the following visualization: Imagine a great sphere, just slightly smaller than infinite. If you zoom close enough to the sphere, you'll notice that it's actually made up of billions of little hexagons, and that each hexagon faces a different direction, like facets of a huge jewel. The sphere is all one thing, but each facet, viewed from close enough, seems to be independent of it.

Truth is that sphere, and those facets all are created by truth, and have an equal portion of truth. There is room for many different truths in the universe, and limiting ourselves to seeing one facet is limiting ourselves to missing the beauty of the whole thing. Personal truth may be merely one facet of this great object, yet it is no more or less important than any other facet. Before you begin looking at the sphere, look at your facet. The sphere will come, but for now, onto the Learning Quest.

Picking up this work probably indicates that you already have found your way to the Learning Quest...all of life is The Learning Quest, a journey from birth to beyond in which the goal, the holy grail, so to speak, is to learn...as much as you can, as often as you can.

By the time we're teenagers, we understand most of the tangible world, and our basic knowledge of things like physics, biology and the other sciences has given us the tools to understand the rest. A learning lull develops, where our primary negative reaction to so-called "new" information can either be "Tell me something I didn't know" or "Tell me something I couldn't have figured out for myself." The teenage attitude then of "I know it all" which frightens parents so, is justified because, compared to the rest of his/her life, the teenager does know it all.

In our last years of high school, and into our twenties the learning lull causes us to seek out a new side, a new direction. Similar lulls happen after life changes, marriage or divorce, or for no apparent reason, something we often call a mid-life crisis. For some, further research into something we already know is enough to satisfy this vanderjahl,

but for many a whole new thing has to be sought, and spirituality is the perfect new quest.

We all make mistakes along the way, some small and some great big ones. The importance is not how “perfectly” the quest goes, but how much we learn from however it goes. A record of your quest is fundamental to this learning. If you don’t already keep a journal, start now. Write at least every other day. If you can’t find something worth writing about, try a ponderance (Appendix A) or use meditations from any number of religions. Make lists, do freeform poetry; you’d be amazed by how much nonsense makes sense later in life.

Most importantly, be yourself. Don’t try to write the Diary of Anne Frank, or great memoirs to be published after you die. If it helps you, tag a note to your journal addressed to your spouse, parents, or kids, asking them to destroy it upon your death. If you feel you must leave something behind of great importance, write it separately, but keep a journal for yourself, and keep it casual and truthful.

* * *

Many of us grow up with a slanted idea of what is sacred. We were told that this statue or that space was sacred and thus apart from ourselves. One of the first steps toward redefining our spirituality is to give up our previous notions of things like “what is sacred?” and create new definitions. Sacred must cease to be separate, for we devalue things kept from us, and it must begin to mean something more, something different.

Our new Sacred could be defined as “Those things that, by bringing us closer to ourselves, bring us closer to divinity.” A child is sacred, a grove, a hiding place where we once kept our toys and games, an engagement ring, a necklace given by a dear friend, all these things are personal relics, as important as a scrap of some saint’s skin or a sliver of so-called crosswood. Perhaps these things are made even more sacred by their general normalness, a pair of old slippers, for instance, that bring comfort, joy and a feeling of being at home are sacred by

their very nature, like the warm wishes of The Gods intended just for you.

The student of Wicca must reevaluate "sacred" under these rules:

#1: Do I consider it sacred because I need it??

Those things that are vital...shelter, food, water, are sacred to everyone, and we should respect and honor them as sacred, but a more personal "sacredness" is what we're seeking in this instance.

#2: Do I consider it sacred because I've been told it is?

These things may be sacred to others, but if your only reason for considering them as personally sacred is because someone has told you so, it is probably not sacred to you. This doesn't mean you shouldn't respect another person's sacred items, just that they have no sacred meaning for you.

#3: Is it religious?

Like the things above, these things should inherently hold some respect, however, those things that are not of your religion are probably not sacred to you. If they have non-religious value (a grandmother's rosary, for instance) than that value should be why it is considered sacred, not what it represents.

#4: Does it call to mind a belief, friendship, or other indefinable part of my Self?

Items like this range from Totemic relics to things that appeal for no apparent reason, many people consider these things explanatory of their life. Some of these items, rocks, feathers, baubles, may have no apparent value, others may have obvious emotional attachment, like an engagement ring. Others may appear ordinary, like the feather you found the day after Eagle spoke to you or the stick from the tree that died at your parent's house, but have great meaning. Like a journal, creating a collection of sacred things tells you about yourself. For many Wiccans, these things become altar decorations, or are placed around a circle to lend their power to the proceedings.

These things are powerful, and we can use them to learn so much about ourselves that they become incredibly valuable. Tamryn, a colleague of mine, once gave his students the assignment of listing personally sacred

things, and giving a brief description of why they considered those things in that way. Students listed things like their children's baby teeth, musical instruments, gravestones and old love letters. With each list, students wrote how the assignment made them feel, and the surprising majority felt that they had learned something about themselves. This is just one example of the soul-searching we ask of our students, a single method of revealing the inner mysteries and a step toward understanding the greater universe. This type of seeking, simplified in the command "Know thyself" is vital to learning any religion. Let me take this moment to remind you that if at any time you find that the religion you are in is making you feel uncomfortable, change it, and if it resists change, fight, or seek again. At least in our human race, you know you best...the goal is to know you better.

* * *

A necessity in our lives is the finding of the spiritual in the physical. When we don't, we run the risk of becoming zombies who've lost touch with their spirituality. Mundane life is very much like cholesterol, and a diet of nothing but the mundane is as likely to kill you as daily bacon and eggs. The inability to create an everyday spirituality is at the root of a good deal of society's problems. By becoming a living example of how life is lived, we can undo these societal ills, and be a better person for it.

In reaching for the perfect integrated total self, the balance of all our conflicting parts, we are beginning to take control of our lives, and our world. The importance of this and the self-respect that comes with it is immeasurable, and the healing it brings is a necessity in a world with all the faults of ours. By acting each minute as a religious/spiritual being, we fully realize the beauty of what we can be, and the initial framework of this spiritual living are The Five Points of Wiccan Belief. (By my nature, as a Wiccan, I relate an everyday spirituality into Wiccan terms, but it is essential, regardless of religion, to the well-being of humankind.)

Living The Wiccan Rede: Upholding the Rede can be a big part of living each day as a Wiccan. For the most part, living the Rede is obvious, just don't cause harm, but let's face it... "Don'ts" aren't enough. We know what not to do. The following are some to-dos:

- Tell the truth, and give up the facades we develop to deal with that which we dislike.

- Get emotional, cry when you have to, and above all, learn from your mistakes.

- Do things for no purpose other than being kind and creating a better universe. In Universal Eclectic Wicca we require community service of our members, but very few members need to be pushed that way. Random acts affect the Universe. Imagine how you've felt when a parking meter's been paid for you. Well, go out and pay some meters, for cryin' out loud!

- Slow down and smell the roses. Take a time out for beauty each day. Visit a museum, sniff a flower, contemplate your love interest. Beauty and love are like vitamins for your spiritual body.

- Stop complaining and DO something. If you complain about politicians, but you don't vote, you are a part of the problem. If the smog bothers you on your drive into work, maybe you need to stop driving into work! If you like to walk through an uncluttered park, then pick it up!

- Respect each person equally whether 18 or 80, whether family or foe. If you feel you must give more respect to elders realize that each person is an elder compared to someone else. Give an extra degree of respect to those who've taken the time to listen to their inner selves and show the wisdom to prove it, regardless of age. With age comes wisdom, but only when it's nurtured. The older person who has spent their life gathering wisdom instead of wool is the true "elder." I've met many an 80 year old without enough wisdom to fill a thimble, and a few toddlers who've made me rethink my actions. A person's genetic relationship to you, their age or what they've done for you does not make them better than you. If ever someone does not treat you with human respect, demand it, it is your birthright, it is part of being a human being, and even the most vile human out there deserves basic

human respect, even if we sometimes must take many rights away to protect the rest of humankind.

- Realize people make mistakes, forgive, but do not forget, an "I'm sorry" without a promise of change is not an apology.

- Notice disturbing trends in your behavior, what do you do that's negative? What problems do you have with your friends, your community? What do you need to change?

Living The Law of Return and The Ethic of Self Responsibility:

These two things, when put into everyday life, are inseparable... and simplistic:

- Realize each action has consequences.

- Don't commit an action that you are not ready to deal with the consequences of.

- Take control of your faults and possession of your doings.

- Don't take the law into your hands unless that's your job.

- If something is wrong, change it, within the Rede and within the law.

- Unjust laws must change

- Know the Whys of the laws of your land.

Resources for Constitutional law in the US are listed in the appendices of this book, look them up and become informed.

Living The Ethic of Constant Improvement:

Again, this is fairly simple...Strive toward positive change at all times. Don't stop learning. Fix what's broken. Improve the Earth.

Living the Ethic of Attunement:

We live by the Ethic of Attunement by setting aside a period of time on a regular basis (once a day, once a week, whatever) and using it to attune ourselves to the three types of divinity. This attunement may be prayer, an offering, sacred time in a garden, or the performance of Ritual. We keep in mind at all times that what we do affects everything about us, just as tossing a stone in still water affects it for meters in any direction.

Other ways of living each day spiritually are less religious. *Just pay attention* is my favorite. Remember that to be a good person is always

better than being a bad person. Any child can tell you why heroes are better than villains...they're better! High Wiccan Law? No. Simple common sense.

* * *

Morality is another one of those bad words we, as Wiccans, aren't supposed to use, ever. Well, guess what, we need to reclaim our morality, and quickly...

What does *morality* mean, anyway??

Morality is, very simply, living our life ethically, within the structure of our religion and our philosophy. It is living our life with morals, ideals and archetypes that, by example, teach us the difference between right and wrong. Again, the effect of the journal is felt here, so get it out and have your pen ready...okay. Ready?

#1: Jot down 10 things that you feel are "wrong" to do...ever.

#2: Jot down 10 things that you think are socially wrong with our culture.

Now, using the Five Points, and your other beliefs, ask yourself the following questions about each of these items:

Why is it wrong? Does it fall into a larger category of wrongdoing (i.e.: lying, injuring?) If so, create a heading on your page with the title of the larger category and list all of your items with that specification.

What would cause this problem to be eliminated or greatly reduced? What simple rules can I follow to prevent doing these things?

Now, on a blank page, turn the above material into "I will not" statements. For example:

Wrong: Religious intolerance.

Social Wrong: Persecution of non-Christians in supposedly non-religious government.

Answers: These things are wrong because they cause harm, and put a single group's beliefs above the beliefs of everyone else.

Moral discovered from these facts: Religious persecution is harmful.

Will not statement: I will not prejudge someone based on his or her Religion.

When you have finished your will not statements, re-read them. This is a good deal of your personal code of ethics. Add will-not statements that you feel are missing, then label the page "Code of Ethics"

Following these ethics is living a moral life...not so bad when you think of it now, huh? The best thing about this moral code is that it can change when it has to. It is not a morality served on stone ala burning bush, so you can disagree with yourself on some things when you change...and we **do** change.

* * *

The Law of Return, the belief that what you put out comes back to you, is often called karma in the practice of Wicca. The Wiccan version of karma can easily be used by the confused as a tool of victimization, and to say I've never heard a so-called Wiccan say that an innocent victim deserved their trauma would be an outright lie. Things happen, and very often they are not in our control. One of the reasons that many of these people will give for blaming the victim is "past life karmic debt"...that's just excrement! Most of what we are taught about "past-lives" doesn't point to such things, and if they did, I don't think reincarnation would be incorporated into Wicca so often.

Sure, reincarnation into a miserable life may be punishment, but most reincarnationists say that you are reincarnated into a non-human form as punishment, or into a human life that is pre-doomed, and you can always escape debt with work.

When something bad happens, the only reason that may exist is the need for a celestial "wake-up call," a lesson, so to speak. Some abuse survivors, when asked what they would do if they could erase the abuse from their past actually say they wouldn't...not because what happened to them wasn't bad, but because what happened to them made them what they now are, and what they are now isn't bad. Facing trauma is a way of learning hard taught lessons, and the skills

learned in surviving this trauma are incredibly valuable in our lives. We've all seen the stereotype of the kid who has it all and unknowingly creates strife to learn how to deal with other problems, for many of those who believe in reincarnation, the trauma you live is merely that strife you've created to learn.

A negative cycle is created by this idea that karma, and reincarnation for that matter, are temporally linear. With that thinking, anything bad must be your fault, if not for a wrong you've done, than something you've brought upon yourself for any number of other reasons, and thus, **still** your fault. This is just plain wrong, and in believing this you are contributing to trauma, and adding into your bad karma pool. Yes, much of what happens in your life can be attributed to something you have done, but not all of it.

These master lessons, especially the unavoidable ones, may appear without any fault of your own. Three major reasons for this uncalled for karma exist. The first is the simplest; you were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Did you ever notice that when you hang out with the wrong crowd you get dragged unwillingly into whatever happens to them? This type of karma is called "Sympathetic Karma," what that means is that through no fault of your own, you feel the effects of another's karmic baggage. This person may be your friend, a passing stranger, whoever, and there is nothing you can do about this except to be careful who you hang out with, good advice for any reason.

The second type of this Karma is not really karmic at all. Have you ever heard someone having a bad day say "I have the feeling someone is trying to tell me something?" That is an example of what we call "Unconscious Intervention," what that means is that something, be it an extra-personal being or your subconscious, is saying, "Hold it, we need to teach you a lesson and we need to teach it now!" Unconscious intervention is usually recognized by the immediate effects, summed up in an "I'll never do that again" type statement. A blatant example of this happened to a friend who was mugged. She had frequented a nightclub in a bad part of town, and was walking there one night against the advice of friends when she was jumped, and her purse

stolen. On any other night that she had walked, she would've had her purse full of credit cards, her phone card and cash, but she had accidentally left her wallet at home, causing the loss of the purse to be only a minor incident. From that day forward, she never walked that route alone, the lesson had been taught.

The third type of karma, and perhaps the most difficult to grasp is Preactive Karma. That is, karma for things you haven't done yet. This all goes back to our belief that time is not linear, despite our linear movement within it. What this means, in theory, is that you may be getting whapped by negative karma you haven't earned yet. I'm not saying that this means you are predestined to earn this karma, but this can mean that if you continue on this path you will earn it. Not changing your life after such a warning can be very detrimental to your spiritual and maybe physical health. It is my opinion that when these events are preactive, we generally know it, know why, and are capable of change. They are like the spirits visiting Scrooge in a Christmas Carol, warning him of actions in the past and present, their presence made just meaningless torture if he can't change the future.

By exercising our true will and living morally, we control the controllable karma, and learn from why we can't control the rest. By acting on our morals, and becoming terminal do-gooders, karma becomes friendlier. In Universal Eclectic Wicca, members are asked to contribute at least four hours a week to community service exclusive of their coven. This may involve environmental or social issues, or just be simple acts of goodness, but each time we do good, we get good, it's just that easy.

* * *

One subject hard to discuss in many religions is forgiveness. Forgiveness is difficult in a culture as steeped in guilt as ours, and let's face it, scapegoating, name-calling and the blame game are our national pastimes. One has only to turn on any television and skip a few channels before we see the talk show with the dubious topic of

"why I can't forgive so and so." We have become **so** wrapped up in condemning our fellow man that we've forgotten the importance of forgiveness. We all make mistakes, and I'm afraid I have to quote Christ here and say "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone." (Punch line: "Thwapp! Awww Mom!")

The first forgiveness needed to move toward change is **self**-forgiveness, and from there, we move on to fixing our wrongs. For some, the simple acknowledgment of "I messed up" is enough, but for many others, forgiveness is to be divided into specific penance, and the basic Wiccan recipe for penance is fairly simple. Repay thrice over what you have taken, but never twice in the same way. For instance, if you have damaged someone's car, first pay for the repairs and any other monetary repercussions, secondly, find something you can do for the person without being noticed, and lastly, keep a watchful eye on that person and present yourself in a time of need, perhaps more so than you normally would.

If you feel you must, keep a running total of debts owed in your mind, or even in your journal. When you get the chance, pay off those debts, but don't write off the person afterwards...merely use them as a path to discovering your helping niche.

More importantly, though, stop trying to be perfect, no one is falling for it, and it's doing you no good...just be yourself, and make that as good as possible!

Chapter Three

The Powers of the Universe

The power that Wiccans believe inherent in all things is broken down into The Four Elements, which, combined with a fifth, Spirit, make up the basic building blocks of our nature. These elements are EARTH, WATER, AIR and FIRE, and while they are based in an Ancient Greek pre-scientific paradigm, today they correspond to the four states of matter. In Wicca, these elements also are linked to compass points, called quarters and the cardinal colors, and are said to represent divine/metaphysical action.

AIR

Quarter: East

Color: Yellow OR White

Altar tool: Censer

Sphere of Influence: Cleansing

Matter state: Gaseous

Ideal example: Oxygen

FIRE

Quarter: South

Color: Red

Altar tool: Candle, Athamé, torch (varies by trad)

Sphere of Influence: Justice, Vengeance or Masculine power

Matter state: Plasma

Ideal Example: Flame

Water

Quarter: West

Color: Blue

Altar tool: Water, Goblet

Sphere of Influence: Comfort, support, relief of pain or Feminine power

Matter State: Liquid

Ideal Example: Pure Water, H₂O

EARTH

Quarter: North

Color: Green or Black, Brown (varies by trad)

Altar tool: Salt or pentacle

Sphere of Influence: Grounding, Focus

Matter State: Solid

Ideal Example: Carbon

The above represents the most common elemental correspondence, but it varies greatly depending on sect and location. One group on the Northeastern New England coast places Water to the East and Air to the West, to recognize the power of the sea and the land winds near their homes. Although most Wiccans begin their Rituals to the east and circle around to represent the passage of the sun, many choose to begin at the North or South, and a group of Bardic Wiccans that I know go North to south to east to west and around, to represent the wandering of the ancient Bards which always brought them home.

In Universal Eclectic Wicca, the elements also represent states to achieve, and in larger circles and some private ones, the elements are invoked as examples of our inner power, "That we may be" like that element. Visualization ¹⁰ is often used to "initiate" the Wiccan to the

path of that element, and the inner powers or states discovered are used in Ritual and everyday life. These visualizations include each element, with a focus on the power of one and the state to be achieved. In group situations, these visualizations are read by one person, often with drumming or instrumental music in the background, at home, a tape player should be used to record the words of the visualization until you no longer need them. Wear comfortable clothes, even use a blanket if you wish, and lie on your back with your hands on your stomach. Breathe in slowly, then hold the breath for three seconds, then slowly exhale. You should feel your stomach rise with each breath, if not, put a book or some small weight on your stomach and practice making it move up and down slightly with your breathing. Don't worry about doing the visualizations NOW, just slow down, be still, and wait for it to come. You may wish to practice these breathing techniques without visualization for a short time each night until they become comfortable...if you fall asleep at any point, don't fret, it just means you reached a VERY intense point of relaxation, and you probably needed the sleep more than you needed the visualization.

Distraction during visualization should be avoided, and this includes "Ohmigods I gotta go to work in two hours" so practice visualization with a loose schedule, and turn off the television and the radio. After a while, the states you may achieve through visualization may become instant, and then distraction doesn't matter. Feel free to change any aspects you feel uncomfortable with in the visualization. If sitting in a chair or a Yoga stance works better for you, then do it. These are all suggestions, none of this is written in stone.

* * *

Grounding: The Earth Visualization

Lie flat on your back in a field, if you do not have access to a field, lay on a floor and first visualize through the steel, wood and concrete. Feel yourself falling until you are lying in the dust below your foundation, and "Touch" the permeable earth that's there...

Reach through the earth into the tiny wormholes permeating the soil. Feel each nerve on your finger extend forward like a root hair system. You cannot move your fingers.

The creatures of the soil, things you once feared perhaps, pass over you, through the strands of your hair. Your hair grows impossibly fast, rooting itself to the ground, entangling itself with your fingers. You cannot move your head...

An energy tingles in your chest, and all the stresses and anxieties grow out as roots through your body and hairs, strengthening you, reaching miles and miles down to an underground lake. You feel from above as each root plunges into the earth warmed water, and as the very last root plunges in, you feel a bitter cold taking over the rest of you, trying to suck every inch of warmth from your bones. You feel the cold sucked through the rest of your body toward the roots, heat slowly returning to your face. You see the cold sucked into the water, forming a silverish slick that bubbles slowly as the pure water milks it from your roots.

A wind springs up in the underground cavern, twisting the ends of your roots and tossing the silver about frantically, painting the walls with it and throwing your roots around viciously. Only the knarled roots of your worries are affected, twisting, bending, but never breaking, still holding you as firm as you need.

Without warning, the wind subsides. The silver light covers everything except the water, which is clear once more. The rocks, your roots, even the walls of the cavern all glow with the light.

The warmth of the lake pushes into you, replacing what the storm drained. You feel the pulse of the water, though you...though the earth...the beat rushes through every inch of you, and you begin to notice the light flowing, moving with the pulse, slowly creeping toward you. A closer look shows the silver light to be thousands of bioluminescent creatures, no larger than fleas, and they swarm silently to you, covering you in a living, pulsing shield.

A column of steam rises from the water, and you feel the heat blocked by the creatures. They melt into every inch of you as the steam and water buffet you, keeping you from burning and tempering into a solid coat of light. Your stresses thus transmuted, the steam stops, and your roots slowly retract,

bringing the light into your body...you feel it just beneath the skin, a tingle of deeper strength. As you open your eyes, you know it's there...you are aware of the difference, and this feeling, this memory is forever. You are changed...you are grounded.

Many (but not all) people experience grounding the first time they practice this visualization. It is not actually a metamorphosis, but a way of rerouting power into a force you already possess. For some, merely lying in bed, or any other personal place, is a way to achieve this state...experiment. When you achieve that anchored feeling, try to remember the sensation in detail. Practice will make it come easier.

* * *

The Womb: The Water Visualization

For this exercise, you want to lie on your back, with your arms crossed over your chest. The Healing state we're attempting to achieve here is the "mentally pure" state that some rituals, especially healing rituals call for. If you have already achieved a grounded state, try grounding yourself before attempting the visualization. Transference from one state to the next is easier than transference from everyday action to Metaphysical action. I've listed the states in order of easiest to hardest for this purpose.

(If you have a tape of ocean waves, play it now, if you have an Ocean Drum, try sitting in a comfortable chair with the Ocean Drum on your lap and slowly rock in a circular motion, if you have no way to hear waves, you'll just have to listen to your heartbeat and imagine the rushing in and out of sound.)

Breathe in, and let that breath be the slow roll of the waves coming in to shore, breathe out, feel it roll away let this continue, the rolling in and out, until you begin to feel a lightness around your body...imagine the soft feel of body-warm water as it laps at your toes, your feet, your ankles, lifting them from the ground and gently pulling you into the water. Your legs, hips, back, touch the water as you float up, carried on the surface of the water effortlessly, and at once, you're floating, carried by the warm water with no fear of sinking.

The Waves increase in speed, pulling you further from land with each new downbeat, and you begin to feel the sun beating upon you, trying to sink you beneath the waves with a heat you feel like a physical pressure. The water beneath you rumbles in fierce protectiveness, and you are rushed upward toward a deep blue sky. Impossibly light, you are tossed off of the cresting waves and into the sky, where you gently lift into an updraft, then spiral down onto a outstretched arm of water, which caresses your body as you land, pulling you down beneath the waves. Your first breath as you sink is difficult, but your body readjusts to the act of water breathing, remembering pre-infancy instinct. The warmth fills you, inside and out, as you are tossed gently, current to current. The water gently flows through your hair, pulling away the dirt of the common world and leaving you pure and innocent. You see yourself rushing toward the skin of the water, the sunlight playing on it like a fragmented mirror, that seems more and more solid as you flow closer. You hit the barrier, and feel it refuse to yield. The pressure builds up behind you, pushing harder, and you are thrust out, taking your first breath of air violently and loud, the pressure exploding from your body. Pulled on by a million gentle fingers, you are carried to the shore, where the earth grows solid beneath your feet. You are truly reborn.

As with the other visualizations, this is only a suggestion, a technique that may or may not help you experience this sensation. Again, we deal here with the difficulty of our languages, for these states, being personal and varied, are indescribable as well.

* * *

Astral Consciousness: The Air Visualization

Air is not only an element of purification, but is also the element of the free mind. For that reason, students of astral projection often use visualizations as “launching boards” into their astral travels. I make no claims about the validity of Astral Travel, because there is no strict definition of it, and no grounded scientific proof. In no way am I saying it does not exist either, discussion of such levels of metaphysics are best left to metaphysical tomes, not books on Wicca. Let me reiterate

here, that Magick, Metaphysics and "New Age" practices are something many Wiccans do, but are not part of the actual religion. Ritual Magick, which is really advanced prayer, will be covered in a later chapter.

Self-hypnosis is recommended for this visualization, or a period of meditation preceding it. If you find that the imagery makes you uncomfortable, but not enough to want to not do it, you may wish to cast a circle (next chapter) or wear a "protective" piece of jewelry. Another idea, carry a small stone in your hand, to remind you of "earth" The deep breathing you do here should be enough to keep you from feeling weird, but if you feel that you are out-of-body prone, do what you need to do to ground yourself or give yourself "protection" from a possible negative experience. If you have enough Metaphysical background to enter reverie while performing this visualization, all the better for you.

Begin with the breathing you've used in other exercises, but with each exhale, feel your extremities slowly begin to go numb...first your fingers and toes, then your hands and feet, all the way up to your neck...try not to move these numb parts, but let twitches, and other unconscious movements happen. When only your head seems moveable, visualize a network of threads of light holding you down. You can feel these threads holding down your power, but as you assert yourself, the tiny threads begin to snap, your body slowly raising as each thread ceases to hold you down. You float carelessly through the air, turning to see your motionless body lying on the floor behind you. You smile, and a few seconds pass before the smile reaches your face below you. You notice a silver umbilical cord tying you to your body, which is safe on the guardian earth, without a further care, you turn and drift up, through the rafters, the roof, whatever, into the night sky. You push yourself up, (optional: past the lights of the city, the smog and heat until you come to pure air) into a black sky dotted with millions of stars. A wind, carrying an electric charge so fierce that you can smell it, pushes you around until you are inches away from a wall of glowing light, which shimmers with pulses of color like minute lightning flashes. You reach out and touch the wall, and are sucked into a fast moving stream of light and air, which carries you impossibly fast. From your

position within the wall, you can see the semi-sphere of a far-off earth, blue-green and brown behind you. the lights of cities twinkle like Christmas lights, adding to its splendor, and a network of paths similar to the one you are on encircle it in a warm net. You step out of the wall into another and are pulled in another direction, toward black clouds that butt up against each other in angry protest. You enter these clouds, dropping out of the energy stream, and feel the caress of lightning as it passes through you. A weight begins to fill you, and you drop several inches, the pressure strong enough to make you feel as if you're about to explode. With a great rip of thunder, the rain begins and the pressure begins to ease, the water pouring through the clouds and through you onto the ground below. Rained out, you feel a little drained, so you hook the energy stream once more, feeling its energy revitalize you. You float some more, allowing yourself to be tossed about by the wind and the energy fields, until you see a circle of stones beneath you, like Stonehenge, only smaller. You touch upon the stone at the center of the ring and feel an energy from it, similar to the one in the wall. You allow yourself to join with the stone's energy for a moment, then press off once more, finding an equilibrium between the draw of the earthy stone and the airy fields of energy. You point a finger at the stone, and a line of energy crackles from your hand and reaches it. You can see energy from the stone trickling into the line, and feel it filling your hand, with your other hand, you create a line between your body and the energy field above you, and for a few moments, you are pulled by the two forces, which yield to you and begin to strengthen you. After a few moments, you allow the lines to disintegrate, knowing you can draw in no more power. You place your hands palm to palm and a globe of energy forms around you. You concentrate for a moment, noticing the umbilical that stretches the miles to your body. You watch as it detaches from you and attaches to the bubble. There is a sucking sound, and your ears pop, and you find yourself standing above your body. You stretch out your hands, and the bubble melds into the body as energy crackles from your hands and is pulled into the body. You allow your left hand to drain itself dry, and then watch as your right hand begins to disintegrate, fingers, arms, shoulder, all forming into lines of light, you look briefly before you allow yourself to be fully drawn back, and notice the smile is still there, peaceful, and serene...You notice as you regain control of your

limbs that the little threads do not reform, you've escaped them, and if they come back, it will be at your request.

* * *

This is only a test...The Fire Visualization

The Fire Visualization creates the mindset of a challenger, a very powerful thinking and feeling method, which we train ourselves in. The Fire consciousness is usefully invoked at any time where we must be grounded through pain, or even in so called "lesser stresses like exams, or defending a thesis. There is a feeling of being drawn or directed in this visualization, like the soul has more important things to do than the body. This can help put you into perspective about your life. Are your greatest worries really as bad as all that?

Begin this visualization like the other ones, only be sure you're warm when you do it. a friend of mine suggests using the visualization while tanning, but I love my skin too much to try. This visualization is best done during the day, although a more imaginative person might imagine traveling around the world before rising into the sun. If, at anytime, you are uncomfortable, then change the visualization. Remember, never do anything you don't want to do!

You feel your body dissolving, breaking down into spherical molecules of black carbon. You are, all at once, more aware of your being than ever. Your heart still beats, your lungs still breathe, but you are made of millions of seething particles. Breathe deep and let the particles float like a flock of swallows into the sky. You curve, you undulate, but all the while you are one, held together by the invisible threads of molecular bonding. You are a great cloud of smoke across the sky, turning the sun blood red as it passes through you. You stand, at once, both under and above yourself. You touch the molecules of smoke and they cling to your mind's fingers, lifting you up, up into the blood red sunlight. Your mind's eyes close for a moment and they are the red of your eyelids, when you open them again you see only the sunlight, impossibly close and impossibly red. The sunlight illuminates your particles as they lift your mind's body toward the red sun, and impossible carpet of red and gold that

warms as you approach the sphere. You feel your blood pounding and notice it's the pounding of the sun. In, hold, out, you breathe, red, gold, orange, it flashes. The beat grows louder. Red. Orange. Gold. You stretch your fingers toward the sun and they are tinged with the clear white of diamonds and quartz, the color drained away into the pounding sun. Your body tingles with the heat, like a hot shower after a cool swim, and you breathe through it, in, out, in, until the heat becomes soothing instead of harsh. The colors change, Red. Orange. Gold. Violet. White. Blue. The heat is so intense it actually cools you. This is the heat of wintergreen, of menthol, and the dust of your magic carpet is the crystal blue-white of ash so pure it resembles snow. A yellow haze forms between you and the sun, so large now that you can see nothing else. The yellow haze comes closer and you see that it is a wall of pale fire, its color the color of fresh lemons, tinged on the outer edge with the blue-white of the hottest flames. With a whoosh you pass through it, and it clings to you like some kind of membrane. The sun is now the deep red color of burning coals and you turn, feet towards the sun and gently float to the surface, held aloft for ages by the heat while pulled forward by the inescapable gravity. Your feet touch the spongy surface of the sun, and you feel no more than the deep heat of your blood. The pounding turns metallic, and you walk towards it. A being of pure fire appears before you, hammering a crystal blade at a forge. He points behind you and you see your footprints lingering on the sun, a patch of black-red coals that ignite slowly into the red of the flaming ground beneath you. You turn back to him and he holds the sword out to you, hilt first. You take it, and he turns into a giant lizard of flame, the great salamander. He roars at you, and you recognize it as a challenge. The sword pulses in your hand as the salamander swipes at you. You dodge and he swishes his lizard tail at you, you dodge once more and swing the sword in a wild arc at the creature. In the moment of connection, the salamander's lizard-like face is aglow with pride in you, his student. His head connects with the blade and disappears in a puff of white smoke. The body fizzles away in a cloud of steam and you find yourself walking through dense orange-tinged fog. The ruins of a great marble temple are before you, and you step up upon a marble dais, soft and cold beneath your ash covered feet. A woman, clad in a white gown nods at you and holds her hand out. You give her the sword and she gestures for

you to reach into a small well and remove the huge gem that lies within it. As you lift the gem a jet of white flame pushes you up, up into the sky and away from the surface of the sun. The gem pulls you into blackness, and then, slowly you approach the earth. The blackness turns to blue as the gem points your feet towards home. It quivers in your grip and pulls away from you, and you find yourself plummeting back toward the earth and slamming you into your body as the gem climbs deeper into space. Before you can breathe another breath, you see the gem, through the roof, through the sky, as it explodes in white hot fire and a star appears in the heavens. Your star.

This visualization is optional, more so than the others, in a Universal Eclectic Wicca Circle, instead of using visualization to discover the fire consciousness, we usually suggest a test of some kind, a fear one might need to conquer. A "trial by Fire" often has very little to do with the actual element, and more to deal with what is called its Sphere of Influence. The Sphere of Influence of an element includes the spiritual and mythological meanings a person or culture attributes to it.

* * *

The Pentagram and the Lesser Elements

The four elements have a great deal of symbolism attached to them. Individually, the elements are often represented by shapes, runes or symbols. Many traditions have different symbols for Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit, and some people encourage creating your own. When writing in a runic alphabet without capital letters or writing in a second language, using symbols, pictographs or a special color to represent each element can make it much easier to distinguish between a fire (light a fire) and Fire (Light a candle to represent Fire).

Spirit, the Fifth Element, is sometimes not symbolized at all. This could be because it is not a part of the boundary of the Circle or because many traditions don't consider Spirit as something invoked by the person casting the circle. It is a more ethereal element, brought to the circle by the practitioner and symbolized by the altar. When represented as a group, the five elements are often symbolized by the pentagram, a five

pointed star in a circle, with Spirit at the top, and the remaining points corresponding to Earth, Air, Fire and Water. The order of these points varies from group to group as do, occasionally, the names of the elements.

There is a lot of myth and mystery regarding the pentagram. Many Pagans claim that the pentagram, with one point up, represents "goodness" and with two points up, represents "darkness." This is actually hogwash. Historically, the pentagram has been used by Jewish, Christian and indigenous faiths with one point up, two points up, or "skewed," without a line of symmetry down the middle. In Wicca, the pentagram is often used with one point up to distinguish it from The Church of Satan's use of it, which is always two points up. In the short history of Modern Wicca, the one point up pentagram has become the norm, although established traditions still use two points up to represent "male" or "the God" and one point up to represent female, or "the Goddess." Many traditions also use variations on the position of the pentagram to indicate degree, or rank, within the tradition.

Another common myth of the pentagram is the use of the word "pentacle." One need only enter the words pentacle and pentagram into a search engine to turn out dozens of webpages insisting the name for the one point up symbol is "pentacle" and for the two points up symbol is "pentagram" **and** sites that state the reverse. Who or what started this campaign is unknown, but the differences between the two names, and the two symbols are not so clear-cut. Pentagram is a name for any five-pointed object drawn on paper. Pentacle is a three dimensional representation of that drawing. Neither "Pentacle" nor "Pentagram" specify the orientation or even the shape of an object beyond having five points, the words don't even require a circle to be around them. My priestess, who was fond of mnemonics, taught us to remember it by thinking: "A telegram is written on paper, an icicle hangs down from the roof. If it is on paper, it's a **pentagram**, if it can hang down, it's a **pentacle**." The interesting thing about mnemonics is we remember them years later, no matter how silly they were. I recommend the use of them to anyone who teaches.

In some traditions, the areas between the points of the pentagram encompass what are called the “lesser” elements. Lesser Elements are combinations of two Greater Elements, although a sub-element is often implied, for instance, smoke, which is suspended pieces of solid matter (earth) is said to be of Earth and Air, but a sub-element of Fire can be implied. In some Fam-Trads, there is mention of the “Ever-Continuing Pentagram”. In its basest form, this pentagram can be begun by forming a second pentacle within the first, with each of its lines the “children” of the elements. It’s important to notice that the Circle or pentagon around the pentagram also represents a series of lines and elements. The following is generally agreed to be the First set of “lesser” elements invoked in some traditions of Wicca, but there is little if any corroboration between trads of the lesser elements beyond them.

Parent Element #1:	Parent Element #2:	Lesser Element:
Air	Fire	Electricity
Air	Water	Clouds
Air	Earth	Smoke
Air	Spirit	Wind
Fire	Water	Steam
Fire	Earth	Magma
Fire	Spirit	Lightning
Water	Earth	Geysers, Springs
Water	Spirit	Rain
Earth	Spirit	Earthquakes

I’ve only seen a few Wiccan circles where the lesser elements were invoked, and they were either weather-related rituals or large group circles where invoking each of these elements gave more people things to do. They are useful, however, when planning circles relating to things like rain or storms. A blessing ritual I know of has protected one house in a tornado-prone spot for years, and the words “fire” and “spirit” are carved in Theban script on a friend’s lightning rod...

Do they work? Statistically, we really don't have the numbers to say, and no one offers a charm or spell as a panacea. My friends in Tornado Alley in Kansas still have a very solid house and a storm cellar, my friend with the lightning rod didn't write the words on his roof to keep the lightning away, because that just wouldn't have worked.

Another friend summed it up this way... "If you see a zealous Christian walking into a Lion's den, you know he's got a lot of faith. If you see a Wiccan walking into a lion's den, you know he's a lion tamer." Now, this isn't meant as a slam against Christians, nor do I believe all lion tamers to be Wiccan, this just illustrates an aspect of our religion. In Wicca, we believe that the Gods fully intend for us to have a plan B, and that using that plan is a part of living within our Religion. The knowledge of things like lightning rods and structural damage capacity are tools to forge our plan Bs, tools given to us by the Gods, and/or the Inner divinity. Using these tools expresses their holiness.

The Elements are also tools, tools that we use to make things work "that much more" in our favor. We do not try to control the Elements, or anything else for that matter. Many unfamiliar with it feel that the use of Ritual Magick is an attempt to supersede God, and wrest power from him and steal it for our own ends. Yes, as Wiccans, we do seek power and control, but only power and control over the one thing we have the right to control...ourselves. Remember, control of other people/things destroys their Will, and destroying the Will is causing harm...Wiccans strive first to do no harm.

Chapter Four

The Wiccan Circle

In chapter two we redefined the word sacred as meaning “those things which, by bringing us closer to ourselves, bring us closer to divinity.” In our culture of over-population and possessiveness, the idea of space as sacred is pretty hard to grasp. In Wicca, we believe that everything is sacred, especially the land, and our belief is that you can buy land, but you can’t own it. The idea of an area as sacred and therefore “special” is hard to grasp in a standard context, and we find ourselves once more with the spiritual blue pencil, editing the dictionary in our heads.

In Wicca, sacred space comes in two distinct types. The first, a new trend, involves the buying, salvaging and naturalizing of land, or the act of buying and setting aside land in trusts and private parks. There is a land rush going on, and one need only look at the side of any highway to see buildings where fields were a year, even a month ago. The purpose of entrusting land is to assure that our children have land and that we have oxygen. One group of people buying land has stated that if we each buy one square mile of land and allow it to produce oxygen with indigenous plants and organic gardens, we can grind the outward growth of cities to a halt, making communities turn inward to restoration of dying neighborhoods and reuse of damaged land. Their theory works like this: When you drive along an interstate and see a few acres for sale here, and a few acres for sale there, don’t look at it

and say "I'd buy it, but I don't want to live next to a highway," say, "I better buy it before some fool stops that oxygen from undoing some of the damage of this highway." Don't look at unused land as needing to be put to good work, see it doing its job. By buying it, and not building on it, we are putting it to the best work there is.

The second, and vastly different form of sacred space that Wiccans use is "worship space," our temples or churches. Wicca needs no buildings for its practice, because the "circle" or temple of Wicca can be built, used and taken down in mere moments. It is a building made of energy, belief and Will, and can be outside, inside, underground or wherever else the practitioners wish it.

Many Fam-Trads state that the reason for the moveable church is a matter of persecution or politics, the need to hide when the preachers come and act like good Christians. This may well be true, but if it were the whole truth, Wicca would now operate out of churches as surely as any other minority religion. Other people simply say it's a matter of money, and that Wiccans, as a population, just don't have the funds. This, too, may be true, but the most definite reason for this transportable church is probably the Wiccan belief that, since the entire world is sacred, the entire world can be used as a church.¹¹

If you asked fifty Wiccans "what" a circle is, you'd probably get a hundred answers, half of which would seem to conflict. The Wiccan Circle defies total explanation. In its simplest form, it's an area marked out, declared in a ceremony, and used during a ritual as a place. In metaphysical terms, the circle is a place where the physical world is left outside and the Spiritual world is as touched upon as much as it can be by physical beings. The Circle contains the power or energy raised until it is released, and keeps negative energies out. It is marked out through varying methods, a few of which I'll detail later in this chapter.

The average Circle is open to all, and all those who stand within are charged "Let none be here but of their own free will" and "Let none leave but with good reason till the temple be cleared."¹² The Circle is a receptacle for energy, and leaving in the middle of a ritual without

good reason is not only a faux-pas of the Wiccan culture, but is said to disrupt those energies gathered within. Only when let go by those within the circle do the energies have direction, and only by being gathered within the Circle do the energies achieve the "critical mass" needed to be pushed toward that direction. In a religion that believes energy inherent in all life, the idea of a circle to "contain it" may seem absurd, but did you ever try to drink a rainstorm? Only by using a cup can we gather enough water to quench our thirst. The Circle is the cup we contain those energies in.

Starhawk, in *Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, refers to the casting of the Circle as "an enacted meditation," which "resonates through layers of meaning to awaken an aspect of ourselves."¹³ Indeed, the Circle is the home of the Spiritual Side that we need to integrate to become whole entities, and the practice of Ritual is to that aspect of the Total Self what food is to our physical body. The Circle is the gateway to the Elemental States detailed earlier, a mental and subconscious trigger that tells our inner selves to "pay attention, this is important." Casting the circle is like tapping into our soul and letting our inner thoughts and feelings rule us instead of society's rules, at least for a time.

When you find something that works for you when casting a circle, try to integrate that aspect into the casting of every Circle. I'm not saying that a perfect set of words or gestures will work every time, but a few things used most of the time can enhance the experience for you, and help you achieve that inner holy state the circle calls for, these can include:

- Wearing a special garment, like a robe, or going Skyclad,
- Wearing your hair differently or Ritual face/body painting.
- Special Jewelry only worn in circle, or almost always worn, but only visible in circle
- Special anointing oils or perfumes, such as clary sage oil, or washing first with a certain kind of soap.
- Special incense or smudge used every time, but never used "outside" of the circle.

-A special place where your circle is cast, or certain tools you use often.

Avoid using the same exact words every time you cast the Circle, instead, try to tailor the act to the moment and situation. If you do have a special relic that helps put you in your mental sacred state, don't feel that you can't do a circle without it in a pinch. Substitution and adaptation are a big part of Wicca, and are nothing to be ashamed of. Remember, as long as you are following the basic tenets of Wicca, you are as Wiccan as anyone else, and **nothing** makes you any more or less "right" than another Wiccan. If something works for you, it's right for you.

* * *

The Five Questions Usually Asked by Someone about to Cast Their First Circle

In my years as a student, and later as a priestess, I've heard these questions asked more than any others by people who want to cast a circle but are afraid that they'll get it "wrong:"

#1: How do I know I have the stuff to cast a circle, don't I need to be initiated to have the power to do it? When does the Priest/Priestess give me the power for this?

If you are alive, you have the power to cast a circle. In an initiation, you are not "given" power. In some circles, the initiation may include some directions for raising and using this power, but Universal Eclectic Wicca has no mandatory initiations. We believe birth to this planet is initiation enough. A dedication rite is more than suitable. Initiations are only provided at special request, usually in instances where the student has had a traumatic life experience and feels a need to be "reborn."

When an initiation is done, it should be an initiation into a new life, not into Wicca or a tradition of Wicca. An initiate should always be able to take him/herself out of the religion without denying the new life they've made.

#2: How do I know if I'm getting it right? OR #3: How do I know if I'm doing it wrong?

Like breathing, casting a circle for ritual use is a natural body/mind function that can't truly be done **wrong**. With practice, further visualization, repetition, research and the inevitable change, your circle will grow to metaphysical perfection, but until then, you still can't get it wrong.

If you intend to pursue Ceremonial Magick, you may have very intricate Circle rituals, designed to protect you from the forces you are working with. That's that set of beliefs, not Wicca. A Wiccan circle can be as complex or as simple as you want. It's your call.

#4: What if I have to leave during the Circle?

It happens. Many of UEW's current standing Clergy are doctors, so it probably happens more to us than to most. In a personal circle, it's best to end it, go do what you need to do, then re-cast when you're done. In a group circle, it's best to be "let out" by the person who cast, but larger circles are uncomfortable to disrupt. It's best to plan for these contingencies with the person casting the circle, and get permission to leave if something comes up. Most of the time, the circle is left through a "door" cut in the side of the circle with the Athamé, and repaired from outside by being "undrawn" and sealed with a pentacle drawn in the air above the cut. In the event that the person who created the circle has to leave, a second should take over leading the circle, someone chosen ahead of time to prevent the moments of inevitable chaos that "taking over" involves.

If you have to leave, with the caster's permission, trace a rough oval or rectangle in the air of the circle with the Athamé or right hand, if you're left handed, or ambidextrous, you may wish to use both hands, or use the left...in some circles, they believe that left handed people work energies backwards, and your priest(ess) or teacher may ask you to cast your circles counterclockwise and other such reversals. Since our circles incorporate the land, I don't think handedness is that important. Although some Wiccans in the southern hemisphere may work differently, I think that clockwise is the way to go for most of us.

After you've stepped through, close the door by retracing the shape with the Athamé or hand and visualize the undoing of the cut. Depending on your group, you may then trace a pentacle or a Celtic cross to strengthen the weakened space.

#5: What degree do I need to achieve to cast a Circle for a coven?

You can cast a personal circle at any degree, but casting a circle for a coven in Universal Eclectic Wicca is done by whoever the coven feels comfortable with, usually a second or third circle member or a Priest(ess). It's generally a question of experience, if you know how, do it for a group, if you don't, practice at home. As with any activity in Wicca, if casting for a group makes you uncomfortable **don't do it**.

* * *

The Circle...Guidelines

Almost every Wiccan circle follows a set of guidelines, sometimes sarcastically called a recipe. Think of it as a list of ingredients and an order of operations. No matter what tradition you belong to, chances are you cast your circle along these lines:

- Physical Demarcation of Boundary: Chalk lines, string, colored tape and other ways of physically drawing a circle on the ground. This also includes placing of the altar in the center or east of the circle and using candles to mark out the boundaries.
- Announcement: The Priest(ess) or caster announces the intention of the Circle and sets rules, often reciting the Wiccan Rede or a Charge specific to their tradition.
- Creation of Elemental Boundaries: Lighting of the candles to represent the elements and especially Fire, lighting incense to purify and invoke Air, use of Salt (earth) and Water. Usually this also involves walking around the circle, another way of physically marking the circle.
- Visualization/creation of Metaphysical Boundaries: Usually this is done by tracing the circle in the air above the physical boundaries, while visualizing white or blue light surrounding the circle.

-Welcoming of Coveners:(omit in solitary circles) Most Eclectic trads cast the circle with the coveners already inside the area, to avoid weakening the circle by cutting a door in it. At this point, the Coveners in these trads are generally greeted by the leader/priest(ess) with a handshake, hug, kiss, whatever, (again, this is by tradition.) In the other trads, this is when the circle is opened and the coveners are let in.

-Welcoming of Gods: This is when the Gods are invited into the circle to be a part of and bear witness to the rites. Never **demand** of the Gods, it's just not the way we do things. In a Universal Eclectic Wicca Circle, the "General Gods," the **Lord** and **Lady**, are welcomed here. When the term "Lord and Lady" is used, the individual is encouraged to insert their Patron/Matron Gods, keeping in mind that all gods are facets on that gem of truth we mentioned earlier and it is impossible to welcome in a part without welcoming in the whole.

-Announcement of Completion: The caster announces the circle is complete, and warns people to not leave without reason until it is dissolved. Usually the caster then says "so mote it be," which means essentially "so it shall be," or "make it this way," all of which are definitions of the non-Wiccan term "amen." In groups who are comfortable with it, "Amen" is a reasonable replacement for So Mote It Be, but So Mote It Be is a term that earlier Wiccans and Magickians used and it somehow seems to reach deep inside of us. I, personally use, "May My Will and Thy Will be one," and maybe I'll explain it in depth sometime, but not now. I don't feel I can stress enough the importance of doing what works. If Amen carries power for you, then use it.

* * *

The Tools

In Wiccan practice there is a set of tools commonly used in Ritual Substitutions are encouraged, so next time you're bummed out about not being able to afford that obsidian Athamé at "Ritual Stuff is Us," remember the First Witches and think, "ya know, what did they

have?" I've listed the tools from most often used to most obscure, with common synonyms and easy pronunciation.

Athamé: "Eth-uh-may" spelled with or without an accent. Also called the Right-handed knife, Black-hilted knife, Sorcerer's knife, the Blade, Dagger, air dagger, skytooth, *excalibur* (meaning sword of quality, I am told,) and probably a couple hundred other names. This is the workhorse of Ritual items, the most commonly used item that can be used as a substitute for many others. It is a dagger with a blade that is usually triangular and double edged (in places where double-edged knives are illegal, many Wiccans leave one side of the blade "thick" or unsharpened, since the knife is not used as a weapon, and usually isn't sharpened completely anyway, why bother with a court case when neglecting a whetstone makes it legal?) It is almost always made of metal, different trads call for iron, copper, steel or silver, but since Universal Eclectic Wicca operates on a belief of personal divine aspects, the M/Patron Gods, it would depend on personal attunement. For a follower dedicated to Diana the best knives are probably silver, for Thor, probably steel. Some Gods won't be obvious, feel free to experiment. Size varies from about 8-16 inches. The Athamé is never used as a weapon, although some traditions speak of "Traitors" to the craft being slain by their own blade. I find this very unlikely since most of the older trads speak of "Nemesis taking her own," or another form of retribution. Used instead of: wand, hand, sickle, sword, boline, staff

Hand: located on the side of your wrist opposite your arm, usually used in ritual with the first two fingers extended and the thumb holding the other two, I've included "hand" as a tool because it's used so often and is considered to be different when used this way. When using your hand instead of an Athamé or wand, visualize it as a focus point for all of your energy. The hand has the unique benefit of being

the one tool you probably already have. Used instead of: Athamé, wand, sword, cord, goblet, anointing stick, staff.

Wand: a length of wood, either 13 inches long (the number of full moons in a year) or the length from the user's elbow to the tip of his/her longest finger. A wand should always be made of wood, although whether that wood is stripped of its bark or shaped in any way is up to its crafter. Ash, Yew, Oak, White Pine, Apple, Hawthorne, Blackthorn, Birch, Willow and Rowan are the most common woods used in wand creation, and a wand of lightning struck wood is supposed to be exceptional. Used instead of: Athamé, hand, sword, staff. A unique wand, the Priapic Wand, is used in the fertility festivals and Handfastings of some trads. Its use seems to have greatly declined in the past fifteen years or so, but it still is the standby at Handfastings. Its use is included in the rituals of many eclectic groups across the country. Named for Priapus, the Roman God of Procreation, the wand is "The length of a man's arm with the last bit the size and shape of a male member (phallus)"¹⁴ for this reason it is sometimes referred to as the Phallic Wand. Other forms of the Priapic Wand end with an acorn or pinecone, and are used as symbolic phalluses. Feminist Wicca seems to prefer these alternate forms. Also called the Maypole Wand or the Male or God's Wand.

Sword: The Wiccan Sword is a larger version of the Athamé, and it is used for many of the same purposes. There are two types of Wiccan Swords, the Coven Sword, which is used in group rituals by a leader or priest(ess), and a personal sword, which is usually used instead of an Athamé for drawing solitary circles. It is never used as a weapon, although in older times a person's own battle sword was their sacred weapon, and since they were **already** killing with it, often defensively, they considered those deaths to be sacred.

Evidence of sword rituals range from the way a Marine polishes a sabre to a Knighting, and the sword has always symbolized more than metal...it is the sword of justice, or peace, or vengeance. It is used to

draw a circle in the earth to protect those within and to break the handfasting cord, and the “giving” of the coven sword to a leader or priestess is a profound act of love and trust. Many feel that the only sword used in ritual should be a “Wiccan Sword” crafted according to their tradition and using certain metals and symbols. Unfortunately, finding a Wiccan Sword is near impossible. I know of three Smiths who craft them, and **none** of them are easy to find outside of their immediate communities. I assume that there are many others out there, and that a few words asked at renaissance faires may help you find one. A “regular” sword will also do, and one of the most beautiful I’ve ever seen was a Civil War-era sabre etched with symbols for freedom, including a portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Don’t be afraid to include Christian heroes in your practice, or to experiment. Remember...All religion is eclectic by design. Your personal sword should represent yourself.

Unlike the Athamé, which can easily be created or altered into existence, I’ve always felt that the sword will “come to you,” either as a gift or as a “karmic occurrence” (like finding it at a flea market or garage sale just when you have the money.) I also feel that there is **nothing** wrong with helping Karma along (you can’t find it if you don’t look,) but don’t obsess on finding a sword, patience is a Wiccan virtue too.

Staff: Like the Sword, the Staff is essentially a larger version of another tool, the wand. It is sometimes used to draw the circle in the earth, but it seems more important as a walking stick than anything else. In at least one bardic tradition, the staff is a mark of level, with the larger staff a mark of a high rank. In some Native American-flavored trades, the staff is the Speaking Stick, passed around the circle so each member may speak without interruption, coupled with eagle, falcon, or seagull feathers (depends on area), the staff is a Prayer Stick, and the animal spirits deliver the messages to the sky. (As long as a Wiccan incorporating Native aspects into his/her rituals is not claiming to practice an indigenous religion, most people have no arguments

against them. In North America, the power of indigenous religion cannot be put aside. For most of us, the spirits of the land are coming alive, and if those spirits are those of Elk, Eagle, Buffalo and Coyote, maybe it's because we've listened hard enough.) Used instead of: Wand, Sword, Athamé

Censer: The censer is a container in which incense is burned. The censer sits on the Altar, but is walked around the circle, for this reason, many prefer Hanging Censers. A simple hanging censer can be made with a brass planter (preferably one with feet, if you can't find a footed one, double the sand.) Take the planter, and use a hammer and a sharp nail (a long carpet tack works best) to place 3, 4, or 5 holes evenly spaced around the lip. Use open brass rings, available at hardware and craft stores, to connect the holes to lengths of 1/4-1/2 inch thick brass chain. Gather the equal lengths into a slightly larger ring, and connect that to an additional loop of brass chain. Fill the planter with 1/4 inch of sand, and burn cone incense or charcoal and resin incense in it. The burning of the incense purifies the air and helps to bring on the correct mental state for circle casting. Used instead of: Smudge

Robe: The robes worn for ritual in Universal Eclectic Wicca circles are almost always white or off-white, and made of cotton or other natural fibers. Black robes invite too much negative publicity, but are fine for private circles. Our use of white is symbolic of our belief that we incorporate all the aspects into one whole, like white light is, in reality, all colors. In the Third Circle, some people choose to wear a special colored robe to identify them immediately as a master of a path.

For certain festivals, like Beltane, people dress in brightly colored robes, with ribbons and flowers everywhere. This is widely different from coven to coven. Skyclad, which means "clad only in the sky," is another way of dressing (or non-dressing) for rituals. Although fundamental to Wicca in the eyes of some traditions, for many people, Skyclad is not an option. Going around unclothed is a state we should find natural, but our culture, and its mistreatment of every person who looks

different, has destroyed the ease we should have nude. A few well-intentioned people feel that the way to fix a person's discomfort is to "shock" them, or make Skyclad mandatory, so they have to choose between being Wiccan or going in the buff. The kind of trauma this causes to the student needs to constantly be undone by other Wiccan teachers, and frankly, we don't need the additional stress. The following is from a letter to members of Religion: Other, a now defunct networking organization which did not admit groups where going skyclad was mandatory:

It is as difficult for a survivor of sexual or similar abuse to go skyclad as it is for a deaf person to hear...If a coven CANNOT make itself available to those with different needs, we cannot make ourselves available to that coven. We are BY NO MEANS saying that those covens are to suddenly CEASE to act skyclad, only that it should be on a member-by-member basis, with no explanation needed. It is not right that society has made it difficult for so many to be comfortable nude...but it is still a fact, and ignoring it does no good. For many, the "state" achieved by removing clothing is not a positive state, and making that a requirement is a good way to make an enemy. If the person's problem is SO bad that the idea of OTHERS being nude causes trauma, we will do our best to find another coven for that person.

Our recommendation is that group rituals be robed, and personal rituals be skyclad. If even the idea of being nude **alone** bothers you, you should probably re-evaluate why and work on that issue, going robed until such time as you feel comfortable with yourself.

In groups where skyclad rituals are preferred, there should be no special attention paid to those who are not skyclad, just as one would pay no attention to a birthmark or scar. Acceptance helps healing.

Cord: The use of the cord in non-magickal Wiccan rituals has become so uncommon that it is listed here only because of its inclusion in many other books on Wicca. Most cord ceremonies are Magickal, and non-religious in nature, although some of these magickal rites are added to rituals. Like Tarot cards and astrology, use in a ritual does not make the cord innately religious. While it's use in Magickal practices is widely known, in religious practice the chief property of the cord seems to be as a nifty belt. In my family, my lover and I have two cords which we use to belt our robes, when we were handfasted, these cords bound us. We've tied them into floral wreathes on our door for Beltane, hung them on our "Chankayulmas" tree and about a million other things. They are a deep symbol of our faith, and help to make the act of dressing for ritual into a holy act unto itself. The cord is supposed to be the user's height, although some traditions say 63 inches.

Bolline or **Boline:** Also known as the white-handled knife or Goddess knife. Generally used for cutting herbs, cords, sacred cakes, etc. I admit a lack of knowledge of this tool, we always used the Athamé for most of these things. In the traditions I know, a sickle was used to cut herbs, however, in *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*, a similar tool is called a **Boleen**. In the same book, a Burin is said to be sometimes be called a white-handled knife, and I've heard this too, even though the burin isn't really a knife, but a tool (sometimes made of bone) for engraving. Many ceremonial magicians call their Magick knife an Athamé, and many ceremonial magicians who are ALSO Wiccan call their (ritual) Athamé a Bolline. This is an example of how the necessary eclecticism of Wicca can produce differing results, each one just as legitimate. Used instead of: Athamé, sickle.

Salt: The salt used in ritual represents both Earth and, when mixed with water "The seed of life" or semen. It is purifying, male and grounding in this form. In some trads, however, salt, or salted water, represents the tears of the birthing goddess, which were shed and became the sea. I prefer to think of salt in scientific terms, as the chief

component, along with water, of our body. It is also a natural crystal, as beautiful as quartz (you may need a microscope to fully grasp that). Another common Wiccan belief is that salted water is the union of male and female into wholeness...the blood. Still another belief is that the sea is the blood of Gaia, thus salt water is sacred...this list goes on. For every trad that gives a unique reason for the use of salt, there are 4 or 5 that give no reason at all, I prefer to tell people to find their own...Consider it "a Wiccan Mystery." Note: Sea Salt is the preferential vehicle here, although in certain parts of the world "Lake" or "Earth" salts are probably better.

Oil: Anointing oils are usually vegetable based, and are charged with energy and used to convey that energy to something else. In one rite, for instance, Clary Sage is used to anoint the head of a Priest that he may think his way through a difficult scenario. Oils for clear thought are commonly used on the forehead of members of a circle. Sage, Jasmine and Pine are common. Used instead of: Smudge (ash).

Cauldron: Although relics point to the use of heavily sculpted bowl-like cauldrons by The Ancient Druids, its use in Wicca has dubious beginnings. Most non-Druidic traditions and Fam-Trads do not use Cauldrons, and most of the Magickal traditions that Wicca shares roots with use a wooden bowl or a flat scrying dish (filled with water) on a tripod. If the cauldron was used in early traditions, it was used because it was a big household implement, not a great metaphysical tool.

A cauldron is bulky and seems to be a sharp turn from the idea that the Wiccan circle is a portable church. Apart from being a really cool way to brew herbal concoctions, and for cooking those big feasts and doing your laundry, the huge iron cauldron is rarely used in Wicca these days. If a cauldron is present in a ritual, it is usually an 8-12 inch diameter replica from a mail order catalog or New Age store. When you examine Rituals calling for caldrons they are often used only as a place to light fires without burning your house down or a place to put

candles so they won't blow out. Other uses such as holding water or items to be charged with energy can be done by the chalice or atop a pentacle (easily made out of clay or carved from wood) I won't say that a cauldron is useless, but because they seem to be a leftover of a bygone "shock-the-public" form of Wicca, they seem better sent off to the Local High School for their next production of Macbeth than used in a ritual.

When lighting a small fire indoors a cauldron can be vital, but good cauldrons are SO hard to find that I feel a necessary substitution should be made in advance. Those same brass planters previously mentioned often appear in larger versions, holding about 2-3 cups of liquid, many of which are shaped like small cauldrons. For an instant cauldron fire that won't set off smoke detectors, place a small piece of stiff (wired) candle wicking in the center of a cauldron-planter filled 3/4 of the way with wax crystals or pellets (these are tiny spheres of wax used instead of block wax by some candle makers, these are widely available at craft stores at reasonable prices. There is no need to melt the wax, just sprinkle a little scented oil or powdered herb near the wick and light...a caldron candle. If you have the time, you could use block wax and regular candlewicking, too. For rituals calling for a cauldron full of water, seeds or flowers, use your chalice, a big bowl or pot, or (if you just must have that "witchy" look) one of those awful black plastic cauldron thingies that people put in the middle of their lawns as planters. Improvise! Used instead of: Chalice, Pentacle, Firepit, Censer.

Chalice or Goblet: Sometimes called a grail, the goblet holds the sacred wine or water, or salted water. I saw a beautiful ritual where the priest and priestess of a coven poured took two goblets full of wine from a big plastic cauldron and poured all but some of the wine into the goblets of two coveners who kept some and poured the rest into the next person's, who kept some and poured the rest into another, so that the two streams went around to meet in the middle with the coven's newest member, who offered a toast to the gods and was welcomed by

the circle. The benefit of this, I was told, as opposed to the more usual drinking from one mug, was that no germs were passed. On a day without a newcomer, the streams would continue until a small bit was poured to the priest and priestess. I've never seen a coven since that could do it without spilling all over the place, but it was still beautiful. Of course, apple juice or anything else can be used in the ritual instead of wine.

Sickle (see Bolline, above): The sickle is used to cut sacred herbs at certain moon phases. It represents "Cronehood" and is often given to a menopausal covener as recognition of a new life phase. I think the modern usage of the sickle as the "Grim Reaper's" tool makes this a bit too morbid, but many feminist Wiccans disagree. Used instead of: Bolline, Athamé.

Smudge: In European practices, herbs were thrown on the fire to produce clouds of scented smoke. Smudge, which is either a bundle of herbs for burning or the ash of sacred herbs used for anointing, is borrowed from Native American Practices and can usually be held in the hand instead of thrown on a fire. For a nice change, burn rosemary or bay instead of the traditional sage or sweetgrass. Stick incense can be used as burning smudge, it'll do in a pinch, but the ash is fairly worthless. Used instead of: Censer, oil.

Pentacle: A piece of clay, wood or metal used on the altar as a decoration and a place to put items to be charged with power or purified. Purists often use wax pentacles that are broken or thrown in a fire afterwards to honor those who had to hide their religion. Many own and use metal or clay molds to make these pentacles, which seems to defeat the purpose. Used instead of: Cauldron.

Crown of Stars and **Horned Helm:** The Crown of Stars is worn by the priestess in a ceremony invoking the Goddess, the Horned Helm is the masculine form. They often represent Herne or Pan, and Diana,

and are omitted by trads using other gods. A Crown of Stars shows the crescent moons and the moon full, or a horned moon, often with stars around the band. A horned helm is usually what could be called a "Viking" helm (although the real Vikings probably wore no such thing), or the "Helm of Herne" which uses a deer's head and neck as a headdress. Anti-hunting and/or vegetarian Wiccans tend to frown on this.

God(dess) figures: Representations of the deities of choice of the solitary, these range from statues to tarot cards. Any personal object that represents one's deities or belief can be placed on an altar to lend its power to the proceedings. In group situations, we recommend only a pair of candles, so that the personal gods of the coveners aren't in any way suppressed.

Anointing stick: A piece of greenwood, with one end mashed, used to apply oil to things.

Book of Shadows: Also called "The great tome." A Wiccan's private book of rituals and other such things. I call mine a "Book of Light" because what I do is out there, open for anyone to see. In the Burning times, it would not have been so. I've included the Book of Shadows as a ritual tool because some use it in the rituals. A Book of Shadows is like a journal of the sacred aspects of life, rituals, the names of coveners, the laws of Wicca. In groups where one of the many versions of the "Charge of The Goddess" is read, it is usually on page one. In my coven's Book of Shadows, the legend of the descent of Persephone is there.

The Charge of The Goddess used by most trads was written by Doreen Valiente, and only recently has been portrayed by "Fundamentalist Wiccans" as an actual event (not a story) and disagreement with this idea could land you in a shouting match. I dislike the whole notion of the words of one person's Goddess being spoken as an absolute truth...If Christianity, which had access to libraries and monks, and all sorts of stuff

like that can't keep a single statement of the Bible the same for hundreds of years, how can one believe Witches, running and hiding at all times could? The Charge of the Goddess should be seen like all Wiccan literature as an inspirational piece of writing, not as "The word of the law put down for all to see." The level of belief in the words of the Charge should not be linked to a belief of its history. I've included two Eclectic versions of the Charge in the back of this book because this book is about a type of Eclectic Wicca. This should not be taken as a slam against more standard versions of the Charge, only as portrayal of lesser-known works of Pagan inspirational writing.

Other: I haven't included candles, matches, a fire extinguisher, altar cloths and numerous other items that are common enough in their usage to be fairly self-explanatory. The altar is the table or whatever upon which these things all sit. My favorite altars open up to stow all the ritual gear and become a nice place to put a vase, a fishbowl, whatever. Some people feel an altar should be free from metal or plastics, but man is a part of the earth, so thus man-made is as much of the earth as anything else, and metal is very earthy. I think it's mostly a matter of taste...it's hard to feel holy about a bright pink milk crate.

* * *

Casting a Circle

The following is a solitary circle; a multi-use group circle will be given in Book Three:

"A Book of Light."

Casting the Circle: Caster places white or appropriately colored candles at the compass points, the altar is at the center of the circle. A small white or beeswax candle, two larger candles, the censer with unlit incense, the Athamé, a dish of salt, a goblet of water, small cakes or cookies for "cakes and ale," a goblet of wine, an offering dish and any items for work to be done within the cast circle. The caster takes a short moment, eyes closed, to become "at peace" before standing before the altar. The small candle is lit, and the caster walks toward the

east. (S)He lights the yellow or white candle from the small candle, saying "Here I call forth the powers of air from the east, that I may be like the air, unfettered and pure." (S)He takes a moment to remember the air visualization, and to contemplate the meaning of the east, air and freedom before continuing onward. (S)He lights the red or white candle to the south with the small candle saying, "Here I call forth the powers of fire from the south, that I may be like fire, enduring all hardships to become strengthened."

Here the caster recalls his/her own "trials by fire" and contemplates the possibility of more, the meaning of the words spoken is thought on, and the caster continues. (S)He lights the blue or white candle to the west, saying, "Here I call forth the powers of water, that I may be like water, supporting and protecting all that I encounter," Here the caster contemplates the water visualization and the meaning of the west in his/her life. (S)He moves on to the North, lighting the green or white candle. "Here I call forth the power of Earth, that I may be like earth, grounded at all times." Here, the caster grounds and thinks before moving to the east to say, "Welcome Air, Fire, Water, Earth, shine your light and lend your strength to this my circle to night/day."

Still moving clockwise, caster returns to altar, and lights incense saying, "Negative forces begone, you are not welcome here." (S)He breathes deeply of the incense and banishes away negative forces within before circling clockwise thrice with the censer, visualizing hate, jealousy and the like fleeing from the smoke. (S)He returns to the altar, picks up the Athamé and picks up a measure of salt with its tip. Inserting the tip of the blade into the water (s)he says "As man to woman so blade to chalice, I purify this water with love, light and power." The caster then walks around the circle, sprinkling the salted water about the circle thrice. Returning to the altar, (s)he raises the Athamé to the sky and visualizes a beam of blue light filling it, (s)he then walks once around the circle, using the Athamé and its light to "cut" a space between the worlds. This done, (s)he moves to the altar and lights the two candles. "Lord and Lady, I invite you to this my

worship, that you may look upon my devotions and celebrations and be heartened and strengthened by them." The caster turns toward the west and announces. "Now is my circle cast, unbreakable and without harm. Thus is sacred space decreed, and no act goes unnoticed. So mote it be."

Rituals such as healing, minor Magick and celebratory rites then take place, followed by "cakes and ale" in which the Lord and Lady are invoked into food and drink and ingested, much as with the Catholic sacrament or the similar rites of numerous indigenous people in which certain foods or drinks are prepared to invoke gods within the body or within the food. A typical blessing of the cakes and ale may be as simple as "Now I partake of your bounty, that I better appreciate my own," to elaborate acts with chalices, athamés or songs. I always "share" the food and drink with the gods by leaving the libation dish outside overnight. The food always disappears...Whether it is absorbed into nothingness, or pecked by birds and our local stray cats, I don't know, I also don't care, who the gods wish to share with is up to them.

After Cakes and Ale, thank the gods for their attention...don't tell them "you can leave now." If you order the gods around like some petty astral spirits, expect to be ignored. Always invoke your Will as it harmonizes with the Will of the gods; never exert Will over the gods. Give as you wish to get, in ritual as well as life.

Closing the circle: Thank the Gods for their attentions, snuff their candles. Dismiss individually each element and thank it for lending its strength, Walk around the circle, drawing the blue light back into the athamé, breathe deep, and take some of the power back. A closing statement usually follows, ending in, "The Circle is open, but ever unbroken...So mote it be"

I can't stress enough the beauty of personal rites. Many good books and teachers are out there with great rituals, but you know you best. Personal sacred space is just that, personal, and I can't presume to tell you what'll work for you. I've given you the tools, use them.

Chapter Five

The Wiccan Gods

In Universal Eclectic Wicca, there are two sets of Gods, the first being the Lord and Lady, who represent the natural duality of the universe and are “unnamed.” The Lord and Lady are invoked in public group rituals unless the members of a group all agree on a name for them for ritual use. Commonly, non-traditional groups that have become Universal Eclectic Wicca organizations maintain all of their rituals unchanged, adopting our laws and ways of teaching. In large festival situations where these and other groups attend, the term Lord and Lady will replace the groups’ names for the gods so that any person who is familiar with Universal Eclectic Wicca will feel at home in a ritual they lead.

The Lord and Lady, put in that order not because of some patriarchal plot, but because of its easier to speak rhythm, represent all of the aspects of the divine force tied into one dual-divinity. In drawings, the Lord and Lady are a two sided face, like the Roman god Janus, with one side male and the other female. They are inseparable, a single coin with two sides, and each side made up of a billion facets. To say “Lady” is to pay tribute to one side of that coin, to say “Lord and Lady” is to pay tribute to the coin as a whole. Universal Eclectic Wicca is dualistic in that way...we do not consider groups who worship a

Goddess without a God as **any more** Wiccan than a group which worships a God without a Goddess.

A case can be made here, and it often is, that the "God" has been being worshipped for two thousand years, to the exclusion of the Goddess. There are two very legitimate reasons to not use this as an excuse to exclude the God. The first is the simplest, two wrongs don't make a right, another kindergarten axiom that hasn't ceased to apply. The second is a bit longer, but put simply, the God worshipped by the Christians **is not** the Wiccan God, and the fact that he is not dependent on a feminine force proves this. The Gods of Wicca are interdependent, male needing female, female needing male.¹⁶

I am not saying that a celestial therapist is needed to alter some great co-dependency crisis in the heavens, merely that The Gods are incapable of creation separately. Yes, they can replicate, and I'm sure when we find a way to create egg-egg and sperm-sperm embryos, we, too, will be able to replicate into little beings exactly one-half of our selves, but actual DNA crossover won't be as effective, and an all-woman, or all-man community would find its gene pool getting smaller and smaller and smaller, until it died out...interdependency in action. True unique creation requires more than one sex, from the smallest one-celled creatures to human beings, so the belief in a single creator, or creatrix, just doesn't hold up to the axiom shared by Wiccans and Hermetic philosophers, "As above, so below."

A good example of creation with only one creator is the Greek God Hephaestos. When Hera saw that Zeus had had a child, Athene, seemingly without the aid of a woman, she created Hephaestos by her own act of parthenogenesis. Hephaestos was created "imperfect" by the standards of the Greek Gods, with none of the beauty, nor the grace of the other gods. He was the most human of the gods. In the Greek Paradigm, in which God is demoted to man, and man is demoted to animal the message is clear, a human child created by parthenogenesis would be the most animal of the humans. In this paradigm, that we have dual creators is evident. A philosopher once told me, "If you are looking out of a window at the calm waters of a lake, and you cannot

see the moon behind you, study its reflection." We are the reflections of divinity, and at least for now, the reflection it casts is two-sexed.

* * *

We interact directly with the Gods, they interact directly with us, but the facet of their totality that we see is dependent upon any number of social, personal and experiential factors. In Wicca, the priests are not there as liaisons to the Gods, but as tour guides to inner development. No one needs a priest(ess) in their living room 24-7, many books (often written by priests) can provide answers to simple questions about Wicca.

In your journal right now, I want you to dedicate the last five pages as a "Resource Guide." In those pages, write down books, people, websites, whatever has helped you in the past, keep a list of phone numbers and organizations that appeal to you. If you subscribe to an on-line system, try using a net search, index, table of contents, "GO" or keyword feature to find Wiccans, Druids and other Pagans that also subscribe. Our flexibility has created a worldwide net of Pagans that are out there recommending and advising on everything from robe color to Neo-Rastafarianism. If you don't have a computer, see if your local library or copy shop has a free or pay per hour on-line service, if it does, you may find that the hourly prices are fairly reasonable, and **a lot** of information can be downloaded in one hour.

We all find, create, and respond to experiences differently, and as you search for the meaning of divinity, you may well find that a certain god and/or goddess appeals to you. This is why Universal Eclectic Wicca supports the belief in Personal Gods. The idea of gods as impersonal, unchanging statues is archaic and unlikely. We see so much of our lives differently from other people without feeling strange about it, that I like roast beef and brie for breakfast and my partner likes bacon and eggs doesn't cause us concern. Why, then, do we feel odd when we realize we view the unviewable differently? These personal Gods, called Patron (and Matron) gods, are the aspects

of divinity that appeal to our inner spirituality. A very loving person, for instance, who is very sensuous and sexual, may celebrate the aspects of Pan and Aphrodite. A person who is really interested in dreams and the night may choose Morpheus, Somnus, or Nyx. A sailor may begin each voyage with a prayer to Aegir, Mannanon MacLir, Neptune or Amphitrite.

When a person replaces "Lord and Lady" with Patron gods, he isn't excluding the other Gods, he is focusing his energy in one or two particular directions. It's similar, in a way, to putting ATTN: on a letter to a large corporation, without it, the letter would eventually get to the right department, but with it, you have a better chance of having it received quickly and answered by the right person. Your patron gods often are your Lord and Lady, when you call them by name, you're just showing that you realize who has been answering you all along.

The Patron gods are invoked in personal rituals, often a healing god for healing, or an ancestral god for family problems. This concept of "right gods for the right job" is central to the belief in universal religion that all gods are valid and that all gods, in some form, exist. Some say all these gods are one god, and while I understand this, knowledge of other religions has required me to believe otherwise. Surely my patron god, Apollo, is not the same god as YHWH, or my friend's patron, Odin, or even my partner's patron from the same pantheon, Hades.

While the gods may well be a part of, or an understanding of, a great, unknowable "all," claiming all gods are one god both negates the guilt of gods said to have done evil things, and negates the concept of polytheism as a whole. In order, for example, for me to accept the Abrahamic god as simply another face of my own god, I have to either take the vengeful god of the Hebrew Bible's actions, which I find abhorrent at times, as the actions of my god, or assume that his followers are wrong about him and ignore their beliefs. I am not in a position to comfortably do either. The only rational assumption, then, is that their god is valid to them, and they believe that he did the things that they claim of him, and my god is valid to me, and I believe what fellow

followers claim of him and the only time either of us is “wrong” is when we make the logical leap to the belief that the people who believe in gods other than ours are wrong. As long as we stick to our own gods, and ideas about them, we are fine. It is only when we question the relationship of others to their gods that we sink into ignorance and hubris. We do not know the minds of the gods, nor do we know the minds of other humans. If we can accept that there are many paths to the same end, each with its own pleasures, pains and lessons, we realize it’s up to us to choose our paths, or take new ones altogether. The Patron gods are a step on a path but not the path itself, just as they are all parts of the divine, but not the divine itself.

* * *

The Goddess(es)

Wicca gloriously embraces the Goddess, forbidden to us for years by a cruel patriarchy that cast women in the dual role of helpless creature and originator of all sin. As the feminist movement took up her call, a wealth of Goddess and pro-woman literature was created. A generation ago, when the first books of feminist Wicca came out, the word Goddess came to our lips with difficulty. Now, even mainstream media is influenced by her touch, and crisis has caused her to be more relevant than ever.

She is at once one goddess and a million goddesses, the power of women as a whole, and the power of all that is feminine is hers. The Goddess is alive and well in America. From her lighted torch over New York to Lady Themis in all her Washington, DC incarnations, the Goddess is around us every moment, so is it so surprising that others finally hear her call? As we witness this glorious rebirth, perhaps resulting from two thousand years of an inherently flawed social system that now crumbles and is forced to change, we are reminded of the legend of Persephone, a story from ancient Greece adapted into the Modern Wiccan “Wheel of the Year:”

"Persephone was gathering flowers along a riverbank when she noticed blooms of exceptional beauty on the opposite bank. Despite the warnings of her mother to never cross the river, Persephone crossed, moving at once to the side of a large well. As she gathered the blooms, her face was reflected in the well, and her smile shown down through the well and into the realm of Hades himself, who at once decided that

Persephone would rule beside him as queen of the underworld.

Spurned by Goddesses in the past, Hades wasted no time and rode up through a rift in the earth, stealing Persephone away and dragging her, screaming, into his realm. He set out feast for the girl to no avail, for she swore she would neither eat nor drink, merely wait out time for the Fates to cut her cord, whereupon she would be called to the Elysian Fields, for she had done no evil in the world and was thus promised eternal bliss.

Above, Demeter looked everywhere for her daughter, and taking the torch of Hecate, she wandered for nine days and nights before she came to a bouquet of wilted flowers and hoof marks. She asked the fountain where the girl had gone and the nymph within told her of Hades' kidnap of the girl. Knowing that none had ever been rescued from the underworld, Demeter was inconsolable, and withdrew into the deepest cave of Olympus, ignoring the crops and forests and leaving them to wither and die. Man's pleas were ignored, but Zeus, eldest brother to Demeter and Patron of Mankind could not stand the destruction and sorrow. He sent down rain, but they were not Demeter's gentle storms, they were rough-hewn thunderstorms that tore at the earth and caused more damage. He bribed, threatened and implored Demeter to come out, but she would not listen. He bribed, threatened and implored Hades, but Demeter was his, he had taken her maidenhood, and in submission she had eaten six seeds of the pomegranate from his hand.

The leaves of the trees had turned brown, and Zeus demanded that Iris paint them so that their sickness would be hidden, and as bidden the rainbow goddess painted them red, orange and gold, the colors of her veil. Demeter seemed to become a bit heartened at the sight, and a gentle rain fell, but as she turned her face toward the well she turned cold at the thought of her daughter, who could not see the beauty of Iris's painting, and in a rage covered the ground and trees with a layer of white snow to hide their beauty. The sound of

her howling in sorrow shred every last leaf from the tree and the world was plunged into darkness, with only Hecate's torch to light the day.

Zeus visited the Fates and implored their knowledge as to how Persephone could possibly be retrieved, and they declared that if the girl had not eaten of the food of the underworld she must be freed.

Zeus flew at once to Hades and demanded her release, for the pomegranate was not the food of the underworld, but food of Demeter's realm, and thus the girl should be freed.

Persephone, much changed by now, spoke with no trace of childhood in her voice and decreed that she should spend one month in Hades' realm for each of the seeds she had eaten, thus giving Demeter her daughter and Hades his queen, and to this day, Zeus' storms, Iris' painting and Hecate's torch help man to survive from the grief of Persephone's descent until the joy of her return."¹⁷

Demeter, goddess of agriculture, and Persephone, goddess of Spring, together with Gaea goddess of the Earth in its entirety, form the original pantheon of Greek Nature Gods, with their equally powerful counterparts Dionysus, Pan and Silenus. These three generations represent the three states of womanhood, the maiden, the mother, and the crone, a powerful image in Wicca. Gaea was an old Goddess, sister to Pontus, the sea, and daughter of Aether and Hemera, Light and Day. Gaea, with Uranus had twelve children, the Titans, who Uranus imprisoned. With his mother's help, Cronus rose up to kill his father, and from the blood of Uranus's death wound rose the Giants, the Melian Nymphs and the Furies. After the

War between the Titans and the Giants, the time of the Golden Age came, and Cronus had six children, Poseidon, Hades, Zeus, Hestia, Hera and Demeter."¹⁸

In the setting of the Myth of Persephone, we have not two, but three women, with Gaea, the grandmother, symbolized by the cave in which Demeter hides for comfort. Gaea was goddess of the Earth with a focus on the actual planet, included in her sphere are such things as earthquakes and caverns. Demeter, on the other hand was the Goddess of the Biosphere, the crust of the earth, rain, wind and agriculture. Her sphere was an aspect of Gaea's, while Persephone's was

an aspect of her own, furthering the belief that power, used correctly, begets power.

The aspects of maiden, mother and crone, or the Triune Goddess are also represented with Artemis (Art-em-iss) or Diana, Virgin Goddess of the hunt, as the maiden. She is symbolized by the crescent moon, her bow, from which her arrows (meteors,) are fired. Few Wiccans see the "triune gods" as a single goddess with "faces," instead recognizing the literary fact that the stages of our lives are reflected in our mythology. Crone Goddesses are rarely, for example, hunched over old ladies, but instead are the wise woman, the healer, or even the whore, who knows the secrets to the universe.

If Artemis is the maiden, then Selene, ancient and little known goddess of the moon and cousin to Gaea, is an ideal Mother, her fullness the belly of a woman in pregnancy. Selene is little written of beyond "Goddess of the Moon," but her powers were near infinite, as she charged womb, herb and everything else with energy. Hecate, the third in this triune¹⁹, is not truly symbolized by the moon, but by a lack of it, and a dark sky is said to be her stomping ground. It is Hecate who points Demeter toward the Nymph who tells of Hades' acts, and Hecate's penchant for caves and earthquakes brings her closer to Gaea in nature than any other goddess. Her cauldron and her place as the mother of all Witches gives her a special place in the eyes of many Wiccans, but the witches of Hecate's creation are far from ourselves. One legend says that all witches are brewed in Hecate's caldron in groups of three, and that one day she had started a batch before realizing she was almost out of eyeballs, the one that went in the pot was shared by the three, and in return for the mistake they were given great powers and endless life. In typical Hecate fashion, the endless life didn't mean endless youth, and to this day the Stygian Witches age and age, growing in power daily, but sharing one eye betwixt the three.

Mentioned rarely is the forth face of the Goddess, Nemesis, Goddess of Balance, who is believed in by Wiccans as the force of Karma, and is ever watching, silently. If Nemesis is seen, it is only by those who have summoned her by their actions, a dubious distinction

at best. While never outwardly mentioned, Nemesis is always implied, but Wiccans who act merely out of fear of Nemesis are considered lesser for it. As one Wiccan priest has been known to say, "A person who follows out of fear of the goddess cannot be lead by her love,"

I should note here that I've chosen to use Greek mythology because nearly everyone should recognize at least half of the names of the Gods in these legends, whereas an Egyptian, Assyrian or Norse variation or similar myth would have much less recognition to the masses of people out there learning. I don't feel the Greek Myths are in any way better than other myths, just more accessible, the necessity of your own research, prayer and experimentation to fully understand the facets of the goddesses can't be stressed enough. Quest onward.

* * *

The God(s)

The God of Wicca is represented in general as the consort of the Goddess and more specifically as the Triple-God, Son, Father and Sacred King or Hunter. A rarely used yet poignant archetype of the Triple God are the Brothers Thanatos and Somnus (Death and Sleep), sons of Nyx, and Somnus's son, Morpheus, Lord of Dreams.

Morpheus, who, contrary to the "Sandman" of comic book fame, is portrayed as a puck-like youth with wings to deliver him from mind to mind faster, is repeatedly offered the chance to "grow up" (i.e.: become sexual,) but he refuses rather than lose his powers. In this way, Morpheus represents the ultimate Peter Pan, the boy who never grows up.

The line drawn between youth and maturity are very sexual. If he is old enough to have sex he must pass into the next phase, and the freedoms of childhood are gone. The passage rites destroyed by Christianity have created the Christian moral dilemma of pre-marital sex, boys are boys until they are married, so what they do before then doesn't count. Unlike the changes women go through, much of a man's changes are exclusively internal, mental and emotional, In Pre-Christian society, the

shaman noticed these changes, and assisted the parents. Now, direct communication from parent to child is the essential formula. Pagan parents must be aware of a son's passage into manhood and prepare him for the additional responsibilities he will now have. The tools are there, but the tools don't work unless they are used.

Representations of the two adult paths are found in Thanatos and Somnus. Thanatos is the more powerful of the two, but is incomplete, always searching for more out of his powers. He is cold, and like Hecate, eternally bitter toward wasted youth. Somnus, while less powerful, has three sons, Icelos, Phantasos and Morpheus, and relives his youth and early adulthood through them. Morpheus, is in fact, seen as always by his father's side, another price of eternal childhood.

Another Greek triarchy are Silenus, the God of fruit-bearing plants and their cultivation, Dionysus, his pupil and God of Wine and Pan, the wild child god of the Wilderness. Silenus, the half-tipsy Satyr or Centaur (sources vary,) traveled the world with Dionysus, teaching the secrets of the vine, much as Demeter taught the secrets of grain. Pan represents untamed male youth, and is god of Shepherds, Forests and Fishing, and considered as jester to the Gods. The idea of Pan as incredibly sexually active is a modern one, as his misfortune with nymphs, dryads and the like is a large part of his legend. He represents sexual energy pent up into frustration and ready to burst. If Morpheus is the eternal child, then Pan is the eternal teenager.

The lack of respect by the Gods for Pan is due to his refusal to give up his wildness, and Morpheus is likewise disrespected. Dionysus and Somnus seem to represent the ideal, an ever expanding adult teaching and learning at the same time, and Silenus and Thanatos represent the adult who stops learning and stagnates. The three archetypes are so important to our understanding of maleness, our own or another's, and in teaching them, we are raising more complete, ever-growing human beings instead of matriarchal drones with no self-esteem.

Chapter Six

Reclaiming our Identity

Before being allowed to achieve the second circle, a student is asked, "Who are you?" The question seems fairly simple, but rediscovering one's identity is difficult in a world where passage rites are shunned. The first step for many people into a "New Self" is a new name. Many birth names are like luggage that we're hauling around, and people feel liberated by changing their names. Wiccan names are beautiful acts of liberation, freeing us from any number of chains and allowing us to move on.

The people most affected by your change of name are your parents, who inevitably wonder why in the name of whatever you want to change your name, which they usually feel more possessive of than you do. Explaining to them that your name was acceptable as a child but that the adult you are now is not that child sometimes helps, but I'm afraid I'm in the Wiccan majority without the guts to do it. My mother knows I'm Kat, my lover calls me Kat, my son says that his mother's name is Kat, but to her, I'm Dawn.

Dawn is a good name, just enough of the sixties in it to be rebellious without facing the hardships my friends Peace, Sky, Ocean and Lovechild must've had. A lot of Wiccans change their name to Dawn, but to me, it has baggage. Dawn was that obnoxious, selfish teenager, a phase I grew out of. Kat was a fresh start and the Wiccan community

accepted that. It was a passage rite. I can go on for hours about what my names mean to me, but the summation is simple, my names aren't what I'm called, they are what I am.

I can think of three men, Christian, David and Matthew, who felt completely content with their names, and found the Wiccan community couldn't grasp it, and that's a side-effect of this new freedom that we have to avoid. Judeo-Christian names are as acceptable as any other as long as the person is content with going by that name. Men seem more inclined to prefer their birth names, and this may be because men are "nicknamed" more as a child, gaining their full name as an adult. Men also are more likely to have ancestral names, and the power in owning the name your forefathers did can't be denied.

Wiccan names are usually chosen from mythology and religion, and if, at this moment every person choosing a name abstained from Diana, anything with wolf in it, Morgan, Merlin, Amber and Phoenix, there would still be too many people with those names, so think about repetition in your choosing. *Buckland's Complete Guide to Witchcraft* has an interesting numerological spin on choosing a name, and never forget your family tree. Ancestral names are incredibly important to Wiccans trying to preserve their identity.

One way of discovering your identity is to do genealogical research, because the power of family is very significant, especially if you discover witchy people in your research, like the local herbalist or mad-woman (who may be the local herbalist.) The discovery, for instance, that you aren't the first one in your family tree who knows the secret properties of that herb which grows locally can be refreshing. Or maybe you belong to one of the "great clans" of Metaphysics, families which, in the eyes of people who study such things, turn out generation upon generation of powerful people. Remember, though, that pride in some of your ancestors doesn't grant automatic pride to all of them. In Fact, in families where the parents and grandparents are not the greatest people in the world, finding ancestors who were neat gives you a chance to find something to be prideful about.

A word here must be spoken about racism, and the difference between racism and pride. Racism is a detriment to society. If your mother or father, spouse or child is in any way promoting racism, it is your duty, as one of "The Good Guys" to try and fix that. Racism, like all forms of ignorance, is something that is added to when you allow it to occur. When a parent allows a child to become racist it is an act of negligence, and anytime that racism is brought before our children and we do not react to it negatively, we are promoting it. Homophobia, Religious Intolerance and other forms of hate through ignorance are equally as intolerable in any community, especially one that loves free will as passionately as we do. When you help someone get rid of his or her ignorant indoctrinations, you are not harming the Will, you are releasing it from the control of other Wills, a very important difference. Like murder and rape, ignorance is an "absolute" wrong, something no one, of any religion, should allow to happen.

Pride, especially ethnic pride, is composed of knowing your ethnicity (we are all one race...Irish, Bantu and Chinese are ethnicities of the human race) and being proud of your roots. There is no pride of color; there is pride of ancestry. We aren't proud because we were born into a family with blue eyes or brown skin, we're proud because our ancestors escaped adversity and created us. Pride isn't about what we are, although *human* pride is a glorious thing, pride's about what we've done, how we've suffered and survived. My maternal family's red hair and hot tempers may indicate a Scotland that England will never tame, but the pride isn't in the hair color, it's in the Celt blood, the strength of our ancestors, and it's something to be proud of.

A friend of mine is English...very English, and we dispute constantly over how awful the English are, and how violent we Americans (or Scottish, since that is my ancestry) are. We smile over it, and laugh. We aren't saying that we're responsible for the entirety of our nations, only that we're glad we're not another nationality because what we are is really cool. A mutual friend, positive that we hated each other, tried to help us by telling us all the things that the English and Americans have in common, it took nearly an hour for us to convince

her that we weren't ethnocentric, and we felt equally as positive about all cultures. Our ancestral cultures are a part of us, and celebrating our similarities and differences are a wonderful part of multiculturalism and ethnic diversity. Knowing what we come from helps us figure out where we are going, and the more diverse our cultural background, the more knowledge we have to draw on to become aware of our pride.

Adoption, Divorce and blended families confuses pride for a lot of people, but the family that you feel is your family should be where you place your pride, and for many of us, not just those who've faced these things, the family isn't genetic. Clan is a strong word, it includes your family, uncles, aunts, ex-wives of uncles, ex-husbands of aunts, step-children, former wives and husbands and their family, grandparents, great-grandparents, lovers, family friends, clergy people and everyone else in your sphere of extended family, including all the "like a brother/sister to me" people you've picked up along the way.

My mother's people are an easily defined clan, and, since their ethnicity is primarily Scottish, the term "Clan" comes easily to them. Anytime a large number of the family was together when I was growing up, someone would say, "Look, the whole Campbell Clan is here." (Which isn't true, because Clan Campbell has many more members than just our little section of family.) It was a word that I always understood, and as I explored my ethnicity, reading of all the Irish and Scottish legends I could find, I discovered that Clan meant so much more than extended family.

A "Wiccan" Clan is usually composed of several families practicing as a coven or whose members practice as a coven. Rules defining who is and who is not clan vary from culture to culture, from tradition to tradition. One tradition put it this way: "Clan members are your family and friends who share your religion and traditions." In addition, some clans include present and former coven members or are actually large groupings of several covens or families that are gathered under one name for one purpose, be it unity, a political project or just an attempt to form community.

The Clan system can give pride in family to those of us who, for whatever reason, can't feel accepted by our natural family. In these instances, Clan consists of both Wiccan and non-Wiccan members focused in general around a family unit. What is often created is an extended family with its own rules that govern such things as relationships and responsibilities. Your clanspeople, or clansmen and clanswomen, are your immediate community and are the people you consider family. I'm not saying you should give up your birth families, quite the contrary. The more people you can turn to in time of need, the better off you are in a crisis. Recreating the Clan system offers a structured alternative family focusing on unity and independence, and often provides a positive environment in which to raise children.

Children who grow up within a clan have a sense of identity, and, in larger clans, a peer group of "safe" kids to play with. The unified family, with its open and frank discussions about personal rights, reduces child abuse by making the solitary necessities of abuse impossible. By creating a large family group, with well-stated rules for conflict and mediation, the Clan heals its members of detrimental upbringing and produces new members with a sense of Self and morality uncommon in today's society.

The ultimate outgrowth of the clan is the intentional community, and Wiccan intentional communities that grow their own food and raise sheep and the like are experiencing a rebirth that lays the communes of the sixties to waste. As a whole the Wiccan population is artistic, above average in intelligence, computer literate and multi-skilled, and when a lot of people with those talents gather in one place the effect is, well...Magick.

Even with an established family and self-identity, many Wiccans feel a lack of religious identity. There is no unifying belief or standard that can be pointed toward to say, "That's what I am," and to a degree, that's beautiful. A problem occurs however, in the treatment of people by Wiccan Clergy. Religion: Other, An Alliance of Alternative Religion, was one of several organizations that published a charter that included strictures on what a Wiccan priest should or shouldn't do.

The purpose of Religion: Other, and other groups that require basic codes of behavior of their members isn't to tell anyone that they are practicing their religion incorrectly, only that they need to consider the affect of their actions upon the Will of other people. The Wiccan Rede and The Ethic of Self-Responsibility cover freedom of Will as clearly as Freedom of religion is covered under the US Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

*From Religion: Other Code of Ethics and Charter:
(an example of a members-only religious identity)*

#1: All groups represented by RO must follow the Wiccan Rede: "An it harm none, do as you will," whether Wiccan or not. This includes not only physical harm to individual people, but "Brainwashing," body altering, and animal sacrifice.

#2: No group represented by RO may charge education fees, or any fees beyond supply fees (supply fees include rent of a space to hold meetings, candles, food and books, but NOT advertising.) Likewise, no group represented by RO may designate a store or crafter from whom supplies MUST be bought. The sole exception to this are groups belonging to larger, national or international organizations, these groups should charge the minimum possible to cover membership fees, or nothing if no fees exist.(Addendum to Article 2: 1 April 94: Groups charging fees and putting those fees visibly back into their religion are hereby excluded from statement one of article 2 provided that exceptions are made for those unable to pay any said fees.) (Addendum#2, Article2, 1 January 95: Classes not relating directly to the religious practices have never been included under article #2)

#3: All groups represented by RO must exclude minors from religious activities unless the parent or guardian accompanies

the minor or gives written consent for the minor to attend. Rituals at which people under the age of eighteen are present may not be performed "Skyclad." (Addendum to article 3:1 January 95 Minors may attend Skyclad rituals if the minor, the minor's parent(s) or guardian(s) and the entirety of the group give written consent...It is still not recommended.)

#4. If the priest or priestess of a group is under the age of eighteen, he or she must be supervised by a person of at least twenty-one years of age.

#5. If the leader of a group has say over the personal lives of his/her followers beyond the realm of advice, or should claim to be a messiah, re-incarnation of a god or of a person, or otherwise super-human and demand worship, RO will NOT, under any circumstances, refer people to, protect, advertise or in any way endorse said group.

#6. RO will not endorse or represent groups that demand that its members go Skyclad, demand oaths of fealty or obedience, or expect sexual favors from its members, including those groups that expect members to be involved with sexual rites to "advance" within the circle. Likewise groups demanding self- or other-mutilation (i.e.: tattoos, body piercing) or drug use, cannot be endorsed or represented.

#7. Sexual rites must be consented to by both parties; a minor, under law, cannot give consent. Such rites may not be attended by minors, and any participation by anyone must be voluntary, without penalty for those who choose not to attend.

#8. Represented groups may not discriminate on ANY BASIS, including sexual orientation, age (see #3,) race, religion (those opposing an organization or educator's views in

an obstructive or offensive manner should be asked to leave,) political ideals, past religious history, or sex (unless the organization advertises as women only or men only, with no exclusion of those who may have started life with another, no, or both gender(s).)

#9. RO will represent only Pagan organizations as being non-Judeo-Christian, as such, no organization basing its beliefs on a Christian Mythos, including Satanism, will be represented. (addendum to Article 9-1 January 95: Pagan Judeo-Christian organizations will be endorsed on a group by group basis if all other articles apply and the President, VP and Representative of said group's area agree upon said representation and endorsement)

#10 (Amended 1 January 95) Those groups whose purpose is to convert, or who preach an "Only way" and do not extend basic respect to those whom they disagree with will be excluded from RO's membership. We believe such actions to be contrary to The Wiccan

Rede and thus contrary to Article #1.²⁰

The strictures listed above are pretty standard as such things go, and if a Wiccan clergy person, **or anyone** ever tries to get you to do something that you feel wrong about, then get away from them, fast.

Forging a personal religious identity can't be given a formula. Creating a moral code, discovering your patron and matron Gods, creating basic rituals and keeping a journal are first steps, though, and when the time comes when you can honestly say "I know who I am," the second circle is ready for you. Sure, a task is usually asked of someone who wishes to achieve the circle, things like creating your first ritual or giving something back to the coven. If you truly want to give something back to Wicca at this point, I suggest, if it's possible, coming out of the closet as a kind, gentle and *Wiccan* Wiccan. Others decide

what Wicca is by example, and for many people the extent of example are two or three weirdoes busted on the national news for raping little girls and calling it "Witchcraft". We know that they are not Wiccan, but how can other people make informed decisions without accurate information? Our country, at least, protects you from religious persecution, and there is a huge community out there that wants to help but is afraid. Stand up...Because if you don't...who will?

Chapter Seven

The Second Circle and The Wheel of the Year

In a coven, entry to the Second Circle is usually a two-meeting process. In the first, the student announces that he or she wishes to be part of the second circle. (S)He demonstrates knowledge of the aspects of the First Circle or has been told by a teacher that (s)he has advanced into "the next stage" of education. In the next meeting, two questions are asked of the student "Who are you?" and "What do you bring to the Second Circle?" The student answers, telling the coven who/what they are honestly and with no glorification, then tells the coven what (s)he brings to the coven. My favorite answers came from one of my friend's students, who answered, "I am Nicole, I'm a human girl from the City of Buffalo in the State of New York of the Country of The United States of America, on the continent of North America, on the planet Earth, also called Terra, third planet from the star called Sol. I bring a warm smile, a shoulder to cry on, friendship, good brownie recipes and fuzzy baby hamsters if anyone wants one."

Certain guidelines as to what you "bring" to a coven must be established. A coven may not demand, or even expect, material goods (even fuzzy baby hamsters.) What you bring is an aspect of yourself that you are proud of, and this is your chance to show it. "I'm a good counselor," "My couch is available for crashing out," "I break up fights,"

and "I can do your taxes," are all things I've heard mentioned. In the Third Circle, one's study is tailored to suit their unique abilities and their desires, by declaring what need you fulfill as a Second Circle coven member, you begin that tailoring ahead of time.

Ceremonies for the Second Circle differ, a tradition in a coven I temporarily led was to bring a dish to pass upon announcing your intention, usually cookies or something like that, to represent what the coven has gained by having you as a member. An astrologer who brought "Love, insight and togetherness" made sugar cookies with frosting drawings of hearts, eyes and infinity symbols. I've been in about seven Universal Eclectic Wicca covens, and led three or four, and never encountered such a practice again, but it was a nice method of self-expression for the group, in which at least six members were proficient bakers.

The Oath of Practice is the aspect of the Second Circle which really separates the members from the First Circle. If ever a coven expects you to swear fealty or secrecy, you should wonder about their reasons. Certainly, revealing the names of coven members to modern inquisitors is bad form, but if you truly follow the Wiccan Rede you wouldn't do that anyway, so why would anyone demand that you swear not to? The Oath isn't about what you do, it's about what you are, and the responsibilities of being Wiccan. A side point of The Oath is the simple fact that it automatically rules out those people who take advantage of the word "Wicca," for their own gain. It gives us something to point to and go, "See...that's what we are, and we don't condone what they've done and we never have and we never will."

The Oath of Practice:

I, name, or "craft name, also called mundane name," swear to live my life by the Five Points of Wiccan Belief, taking responsibility for my actions and educating of my religion when asked. I will not turn any in need of help away without good cause, nor will I allow slander and misuse of Wicca to go

*unchallenged, because someday I may have need of
help or be slandered.*

*Within my practice, if I teach, I ask nothing in return, and
expect nothing in return but the respect that I, as a teacher,
deserve for the time and effort I put into each student.*

*I take some responsibility for those I teach, and if I find I
have taught them incorrectly, it falls to me to undo the
wrongs done.*

*I affirm that I practice Wicca, and all aspects of my prac-
tice, with a free Will, and I will never deny, or in any way
restrict the Will of a student.*

*I am fully aware of the ramifications of this Oath and I
sign/swear it before the eyes of The Lord and Lady in truth.
So mote it be.*

Name(s) _____ Date _____

In Universal Eclectic Wicca, taking the Oath is important because if you haven't taken it you may not teach "Universal Eclectic Wicca." Certainly, anyone can teach aspects of Wicca, but within the Second Circle you gain the privilege of teaching with a defined curriculum and a network of teachers who can help you. I know I sound like an infomercial at this point, but I speak from experience. Don't, **do not**, don't ever try to teach a coven without a curriculum, you will end up confused and frustrated, and your students' interests will be lost amid the chaos.

A physical manifestation of The Oath is a common thing among the sacred relics of Universal Eclectic Wicca coven members, and in at least one group, signing a copy of The Oath is part of their ceremony. If you are serious about Second Circle studies and are a solitary, signing a copy of the oath easily replaces a coven ceremony, and prepares you for teaching if that's your desire. If, as a solitary or coven member, you achieve the Second Circle, I want to know. As far as I know, Universal Eclectic Wicca is the first tradition with the commitment to be aware of its practitioners. We're a growing and changing tradition and we want

and need the input of our practitioners. We have covens in the US, Canada and now Australia (joy!), so we try to keep in touch via the internet. The Web address for correspondence with the Church of Universal Eclectic Wicca is <http://www.cuew.org>. We try our best to be as available as possible.

* * *

Commitment through celebration

Entry in the Second circle means that you begin to put more into being Wiccan than just the morality and the beliefs. The most visible aspect of joining the Second Circle is the inclusion of seasonal, and perhaps lunar rituals into your personal practice. At least in Universal Eclectic Wicca, and in my experience, most other covens, the celebratory rituals are open to all parties. What we mean by inclusion is not that you just go to the ritual but you take part in the ritual beyond a mere audience member. For some, the Second Circle is their first introduction to the practices of the eight yearly "holy days" of Wicca, for others, it's just a commitment to celebrate, or at least be aware, when the holy days occur.

I feel it necessary to add here that we all forget holy days, or make plans without realizing it will interfere with them. This makes you a normal person so don't sweat it. An anecdote I'm fond of relating is that of Tamara, a student of mine, whose first teacher was a fairly well-known New York City priestess who'd been "brought up" by parents who were Witches, and had never been anything but Wiccan in her life. I'll shorten the story to say that she was rather stressed out, and slammed her apartment door on some kids who were dressed in costumes, "harassing her." Only when her coven showed up later that night did she remember it was Samhain and they spent the night looking about the apartment building for the kids she'd slammed the door on.

Whenever I tell someone "Oh, no, it can't be the Solstice yet, it was just Beltane," I think of Tamara's priestess. We all get absent minded now and then, and often, it's the first sign of stress related problems.

As with any circle, if you're stressed out at a holiday celebration and you feel that the celebration will add to the stress, then don't do it. Sometimes, the celebration will actually relieve the stress, so analyze and discover what's causing it first. I've actually seen references to stress in older Books of Shadows, it's usually referred to as "Drain" and is given as reason #1 to not celebrate any ritual where personal energy will be needed. Many rituals for relieving stress are out there, and one appears in part three of this book: "A Book of Light." As always, substitutions and personal creations are recommended.

This "commitment to celebrate" involves maintaining your religious identity, and feeding the self. It's too easy in a world built on physical gratification to ignore the rest of the self and build upon the physical. Imbalanced, fractured self is a cause of addictions: alcohol, sexual, food, whatever, and as we balance our spiritual/physical/Magickal/emotional selves, we feel less pulled by any one side and more harmonized, more integrated. By celebrating the rituals of the seasons, we are both "feeding" our spiritual, Magickal and emotional parts, and strengthening the bonds that hold it all together. By incorporating more of our diverse parts into each ritual, we make them more than a celebration of a day and into a celebration of the Gods, the seasons, the self and more. For this reason, a self-created ritual is especially preferable to a "book ritual" when that ritual is a private celebratory one.

* * *

The Wheel of the Year

An understanding of the nature of rituals is important before fully defining The Wheel of the Year. There are three primary forms of ritual in Wicca. Celebratory rituals are the opposite of so-called "solemnities" such as Handfastings and funeral rites. Solemnities (which are rarely solemn,) celebrate ourselves and the various life changes that we go through. Celebratory Rituals are rituals that are held to celebrate the turning of the seasons, the glory of the Gods, and numerous other celebrational things. The third type of ritual, Working Ritual, is

ritual with a defined purpose, such as healing, or releasing negative energy. Working Rituals may be to aid disasters that you are too far away to physically help, or to comfort and heal those who you can't be with. Working Rituals fulfill all the same purposes as "Praying for" something or someone, and praying is a type of Working Ritual. Remember, all ritual is merely "advanced prayer."

The Wheel of the Year is comprised of four solar or "celestial" holidays, called liminal holidays or Quarters and four harvest holidays, called Cross-quarters. The solar holidays are held on the equinoxes and solstices and celebrate the moments when the world is halfway between one season and another. An Equinox (ee-kwin-ox or, alternately, e-ki-nox) is a point of intersection between the Sun's annual path and the celestial equator.²¹ At those moments; the Sun is exactly over the equator and day and night are of equal length. The Spring or Vernal Equinox, called Ostara occurs around March 21st, The Autumnal equinox, or Mabon, occurs around September 21st. The Equinoxes are considered the first days of Spring and Fall. A Solstice is when the sun is furthest from the equator and the day is either the longest or the shortest day of the year. The longest, around June 21st, is the Summer Solstice, called Midsummer and Litha, which is the first day of Summer. The shortest, around December 21st, is Yule, or Midwinter, and is the first day of Winter.

In some ancient traditions, there were only two seasons, Summer, the light half of the Year, which was said to relate to the Goddess, and Winter, which was the time of the God. This is easily related to early agricultural society, in which the field is important for summer and the hunt for fall. A hunter/gatherer society would find the belief in the Goddess and God as near instinctual, whereas the industrialized world would find itself more disjointed and separated from natural belief. The idea of the noble savage from much early industrial age writings expresses this feeling. By writing books about African and Native American heroes from "the wild," "untainted by the corruption of society," our more recent ancestors were expressing the tortures

of unfulfilled spirit. By rediscovering The Wheel of The Year, we fulfill that spirit.

The Cross-Quarters, named Beltane, Lughnasa, Samhain and Imbolc, are harvest festivals tacked on to the Wheel of The Year as society became more agricultural. Beltane (bell-tayne) marks the completion of planting, Lughnasa (loo-nah-sah) marks the first harvest, Samhain (so-when) was the second harvest and the time for the first slaughter, the slaughter of those animals destined for the dinner table. Yule (youl) represented the second slaughter, the slaughter of animals that would not make it through the season of storms and was the harvest for winter-apples, potatoes and other second-crop winter fruits. Imbolc (im-bolk) represented first thaw, the turning of the soil and was the time when animals and women alike got pregnant. Each festival had its own share of traditions and rituals that stretched cross-culturally and religiously.

Christianity, Roman invaders and Druids passed the rituals back and forth between them, and the modern Wiccan Wheel of the Year is a synthesis of these, and our diverse modern cultures.

* * *

The Dying King

A predominate myth in Wicca's Wheel of The Year is that of the Dying King, who is born, in this pre-Christian myth, at Yule. The Goddess rests after his birth, and the land "hibernates" resulting in the cold, harshness of Winter. She begins to awaken at Imbolc, and the infant God, the Sun, begins to exert power with her. By Ostara, she has embraced the land in fertility, and her son walks with the land, bringing forth the hidden and newborn animals. Beltane comes, and a mature God and the Goddess are joined as one, she conceives, and at the Summer Solstice, they appear together, gloriously full of power. At Lughnasa, as the sun begins to "Weaken" so too does the God. The Goddess paves the way for his death, by beginning to withdraw from the Earth so that the people know to harvest and by the Solstice, she,

beginning to slow down with the increasing burden of the pregnancy, and he, steadily growing older, are equal in power. They mutually decline until Samhain, where the God dies, and the Goddess rests in preparation for the long labor ahead. In one tradition, a feast is held for the Goddess in her last month, and after the feast, she begins the arduous labor that parodies December, with periods of pain and relief, always with the anticipation of the final rebirth of the "Sun King."

In this tradition, the feast was held thirteen days before Yule, to represent the thirteen months of the lunar year. In my own family, we've extended this period, and, as you may've guessed, we hold "The Final Feast" on Thanksgiving, and save our money, keeping all meals in December as frugal as possible until the big feast celebrating the birth of the God. This helps us keep in mind the feeling of this time of the year for our ancestors.

* * *

The Equinoxes (Equinoces)

The Spring, or Vernal Equinox is also called Ostara, Eostra, Festival of the Trees, Alban Eilir, Ostra and Persephone's day, and represents the "coming to life" of the earth. Wiccan rituals of this day often involve seed planting, dancing, egg painting (an ancient Pagan custom) and huge banquets of herbed bread, spring berries and rhubarb. Children born or conceived on Ostara are said to be healthy, strong, imaginative and "green thumbbed." Ostara is the time to work rebirth Magicks, and an old tradition of Ostara is to call off debts. Some peoples believe that by holding on to the past, you prevent the future, so, to speed the future up, you have to give up the past. Unfortunately, the utility company doesn't seem to understand that. A modern way to celebrate the severing of the past is to try to have all of your December bills paid off by Ostara. Pay the bills, save the paperwork that comes with it, clip off the part you keep for your records, and burn the rest in a great stack in a fire set Ostara morning. Try to spend the period between Ostara and Beltane accomplishing as much as possible. Open

the windows, clean the house, and finish off the dark half of the year so that by Beltane, the year is fresh and new. Remember, the ritual's just half of the practice!

The Autumnal Equinox, also known as Alban Elfed, Mabon, or The Feast of Second Harvest, is just that, a feast, held after the second harvest. The celebration often includes feasts of grain foods, domestic meats like mutton or beef, and apples and tender young pumpkins. Autumn is construction season where I grew up, and many Pagan intentional communities hold Barn-raising type festivals, fixing leaky roofs, building temple spaces, or even working to build houses for members who may not have the money to buy or hire a contractor. This is, of course, fully dependent on the number of people you have, but a hard day of physical labor, topped by a feast, really helps citified folk to get the feel of a day at harvest. Children born at Mabon are generally compared to the harvest. If it was good, the child is said the "Grow tall and prosper like the grain," but a poor season usually boded badly for an infant, not because of his/her date of birth but because of the food supply, and the child was said to be lucky to survive past Yule.

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The Solstices(Solstia)

Like the Equinoxes, the Solstices are said by some to be lesser ceremonies. The Summer Solstice, called Litha, is when the God and Goddess reign with the most power. It is a time of high Magick a time for feasts, dancing, games of strength and endurance and warfare (usually of the reenactment variety.) Children born on the Summer Solstice are supposed to be fiery, smart, strong, temperamental and willful, red haired children born on the Solstice are said to be marked by the Sun King, and will receive special blessings. Feasts of The Summer Solstice are of orange foods, carrots, wild berries, peaches, and any fruit which has a brief period of sweetness, especially persimmons. This is the

night of Morpheus, Psyche, Demeter, Apollo and Horae. Prophetic dreams of this night are said to always come true.

The Winter Solstice, or Yule, is the celebration of the first day of winter, although perceived by many as midwinter and the contemporary Wiccan's "Christmas." In my family, we have a Yule Tree²², which we decorate with star and moon Santas, brooms, cookies, cranberries, popcorn, our sacred cords and all sorts of relics, a crystal from this vacation, an ornament from another. Our son is taught of St. Klaus, Woden delivering gifts from his sky-sleigh pulled by reindeer, and of the birth of the baby "Sun" God. We tell Christian friends that our family is Wiccan, that "happy holiday" and "happy Yuletide" cards are acceptable, and "Merry Christmas" is less so. Frosty the Snowman, a Visit from St. Nick, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and such things can be very secular, and we bake cookies of crosses, stars of David, stars, angels, Santas, dredels, peace symbols and crescent moons and give them out in great huge batches to our friends, as Unity cookies. We've learned to accept December Holidays as a time to celebrate our Unity as a human race and our individual beauties, too, the true goal of Multiculturality. At Ritual, we give each other handmade gifts, usually of food, and we each pick a name out of a hat and give a gift to a coven member at a feast/party on the actual "Christmas" night (face it, being alone for Christmas sucks, even if you're not Christian.).

A child born on Yule is said to have the power of the Sun God, and the mother is said to be blessed too, of especial sacredness are infants with black hair, who are said to have the powers of the storms, and very pale children born on Yule are said to come from the womb of the Goddess and be great workers of Magick. Some say the gift child is often a changeling, and will die by spring, but bring great prosperity to the family, not my idea of a Blessing.

A venison Stew the night of Yule, rich with potatoes, carrots and turnips is the traditional Yule feast, served with pan bread and Yule Wine, which is often a cranberry-apple wine made at Samhain, or Mulled Cider. A vegetarian Wiccan meal I went to consisted of Stewed

Pumpkin with carrots and a bunch of other indistinguishable vegetables and grains. As I always say, "whatever works."

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Imbolc

Imbolc (February 1st or 2nd) is the Festival of the beginning of the end of Winter, a more traditional and secular midwinter's festival, away from the hype of Christmas. Fires are kindled, and a light is placed in each window to show good fortune the way to the house. It is said that to turn out a beggar on Imbolc is to risk turning out the weakened Goddess in disguise. One older trad says, "Take a beggar into your house on Imbolc, give him your best chair, your best meat, your best blanket, if he stays until Ostara, you shall be greatly rewarded."

Imbolc is also the festival of the unsung deed, when we lived in sub-artic Syracuse, NY, this consisted of sneaking out and shoveling the whole neighborhood, or driving around to jump start cars. Children born on Imbolc are said to be the "first children of Spring" and will always be one step ahead of everyone else. Feasts of Imbolc are of potatoes, turnips, bread, rabbit and venison, and are supposed to be both meager and hopeful, often using the last of the spices, salt and other supplies of the winter.

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Beltane

Beltane (May 1st) is a festival which somehow escaped total absorption by Christianity, and, even in modern times, has been practiced almost instinctually by county folk, usually as May Day. Pink, white and red are the colors, with spring primroses, violets, pansies and crocus the flowers of choice. Irises, sacred flower of the rainbow goddess, are said to bode a glorious summer if in bloom by Beltane, and a rainbow on Beltane is a powerful mystic sign. Children, especially girls, born on Beltane are the "children of the Goddess," and children conceived on

Beltane are said to have "luck and fortune beyond the world." In celebration of Persephone's homecoming, bowls of flowers are placed everywhere, and nosegays are placed on the doors of absolute strangers. Beltane is the fertility ceremony supreme, with May Pole dances, and caldrons and bowls of wine free-flowing. A word of caution here, Beltane seems to be the trigger for many powerful instincts, and the most responsible, least fertile people I know have little January children to show for it. Likewise, if you are finding it difficult to conceive, try waiting a week and attempting on Beltane. I have two glorious "nieces-who-aren't-really" as a result of a good friend taking my advice. With fertility clinics running in the tens of thousands for simple treatments, can faith, a little May Wine and a night of passion really be that risky?

"Womanhood" ceremonies, new business deals, real estate buying and other rites of passage are all for Beltane, as are the "passion" fruits, like strawberries, cherries, passion fruit and kiwi. Eating a pomegranate on Beltane is said to be in bad taste, however, and this is a basically vegetarian holiday, no meat at the feast unless it's spring chicken or the first fish of the season. The essence of Beltane is party, starting all over and getting it right this time. No doubt of the Celebratory nature of Beltane is possible.

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Lughnasa

Lughnasa, (August 1st/July 31st) is the feast of the first harvest, and its feast is usually of grains, corn and blueberries. Children born on Lughnasa, like children born on Mabon, are said to be like the crop that is brought in. Very little is written of Lughnasa, and it seems to be a fairly recent holiday, appearing within the past 500 years. Often Mabon and Lughnasa are combined into great harvest festivals once everything is done, and the suggestion of defined first and second harvests conjures thoughts of machinery and single crops. More likely, Lughnasa was the beginning of the harvesting season, with Mabon its

end. Lughnasa, without a doubt, is the most often overlooked festival of the year.

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Samhain

Samhain²³, (October 31st) pronounced "so-When" like "so-when is Samhain?," or "sow-when," like "I was looking at piglets and a sow when she bit me," is the holiday that has been confiscated, wrapped up in a bright pink happy bag and returned to us barely recognizable as Halloween. Contrary to bizarre portrayals by Wiccan revisionists, Samhain was a time for sacrifice in the ancient world, sacrifice of those cattle and sheep that wouldn't live through winter, but also occasionally of a person, who, by dying with the God could sort of plead the case of a pleasant winter with the Celestial forces.²⁴ Children born on Samhain are said to be great in power but attracted to "necromancy, graveyards and other ghoulish things," and children conceived on Samhain were said to be the incarnations of unsettled dead, so sex on Samhain is fairly taboo.

It is said that the veil between the worlds is thinnest on Samhain, and communication with, and even attacks by, the dead are part of its mysticism. Welcoming the ancestors to the Samhain feast is common, as is wearing masks so dead enemies can't find you. Celebrations in honor of beloved people who have passed away are common on Samhain, and it is the Wiccan New Year, because of the Ancient Druidic belief that day began with the setting of the sun, and thus the dark half of the year was the beginning. New Years resolutions are made on Samhain, and it is the traditional day to raise a covener within the circle.

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-Other Holidays-

Secular Holidays are practiced as much by Wiccans as anyone, and rituals for Thanksgiving, New Year's, etc. are practiced by many

Wiccans as a way of “bringing home” the meanings of these days. Community, not just of Wiccan folk, but of all human kind is built on the fact that, while we are much different, we are also much the same, blessed diversity once more.

Many Wiccans hold other faiths while they are Wiccan, faiths like reconstructions of Hellenic mystery cults, which don’t require that you forsake all other beliefs, only that you believe what is required to participate. It is not unusual, therefore, for an individual Wiccan or coven to have 5, 10, even 20 additional holy days in their calendar. Not to mention birthdays, anniversaries, and similar days. If nothing else, Wiccans seem to love to celebrate and more, not less, is the rule.

Chapter Eight

Life Changes: Birth, Marriage, Death

Born Wiccan

Blessed indeed are those children born into Wicca, who don't need to lose the Christian indoctrination of their parents. I myself, while not being "born" Wiccan, was "raised right" in the Wiccan sense, that is, given the right and ability to explore, create, and "discover" religion as I grew. When I first became involved in Wicca, the coven I was in consisted of feminist Lesbians and "Wild Men," a bizarre combination of two covens, lead by a priestess and priest who were like siblings who were attempting to counter the Anti-man, and Anti-woman aspects of their respective covens by integrating them. From day one I learned that Wicca, like any religion, has its rocky moments, which probably saved me from the disgust and disillusionment that some Wiccans face as they discover themselves and their differences from the "norm," causing them to leave covens and organizations.

As head of Religion: Other, I managed to corner several Wiccans who'd left covens, or left Wicca altogether. Although the reasons given were unique, we fit many of them into ten categories, and labeled them, from 10 (4 of 30) to 1 (17 of 30) (Most of the people interviewed gave answers that included two or more categories.) It looked like this:

Why I left my Coven/Group/Wicca as a whole:

10: My Profession wasn't respected by other Wiccans (4)

09: Nothing was being accomplished. (5)

08: Focusing too much on one or two people (5)

07: Personality clash, not coven leader (6)

06: Personality clash, Coven leader(9)

05: Did not respect my gender (10)

04: Did not respect my sexual orientation/history (10)

03: Was causing too much stress in my life. (11)

02: Didn't respect my spouse and/or kids. (12)

01: Expected too much of my time (14)

The Wiccan Family, with its children, deserves more respect than it gets by its community. A part of that is the make-up of Wicca, because we attract diverse populations, especially those populations exiled by the Christian world, we don't have as many kids. We have a large gay population in Wicca, because we know that love is never evil, and a large population of childless-by-choice heterosexual couples. Wiccans, as a majority, are pro-choice, pro-world type people, so when children are born to a Wiccan couple, it's usually planned, and, far too often, it's decided against.

The Wiccan family with children faces serious dilemmas. Wiccan gatherings rarely have daycare, and often bringing children is frowned upon, or just an excuse to get treated rudely by inconsiderate people who have no clue about child rearing. I've been told I'm adding to the population crisis because of my son and the fact that I plan to have at least one more child before my life is up has caused rifts between my family and some of my coveners, but the answer is simple. We, as Wiccans, are going to raise peaceful, respectful children to counter all the kids being brought up wrong throughout the world. Even if we choose to raise our children outside of religion and let them choose their own faith, a method preferable to the way most were raised, our morality, passed generation to generation **deserves** to be continued, and the children out there shouldn't be denied it because we have so few parenting role models who are Wiccan. Far better to try than die out.

A child, raised by Wiccans, taught the knowledge that can be taught and shown the way to the rest is given more clearly those tools we felt deprived of by other upbringing. Parents attempting to raise a child in this violent, Christian-weighted world deserve our respect and assistance, not further hindrances. A few years ago, I got together with two other Wiccan mothers, one a fellow priestess, the other a second circle teacher, between the three of us, we created the "Wiccan Mother's Demands" for an issue of *The Green*:

The Wiccan Mother's Demands:

We, the mothers of the future, in order to produce a more perfect generation, demand the following of our community, or else:

- 1: Being a mother means responsibility, sometimes we can't drop what we're doing to come to a circle, please give us advance notice.
- 2: Childcare at Wiccan Gatherings should be available, peaceful and productive.
- 3: Our children, not our covens, come first.
- 4: Our children, when they are at gatherings are going to be noisy, playful, demanding and occasionally disruptive. They are children, that's part of their job.
- 5: We have the right to bring our children with us, and no one has the right to stop us.

For us, at least, and the few other Wiccan Parents we know, bringing our children up Wiccan means bringing our children up free, and that if that freedom causes our children to choose another religion, then so be it. My child is not Wiccan, he is a child, and religious decisions aren't his duty, being a child is. If I can balance teaching him my beliefs, and the beliefs of other people, he'll probably choose my way, but it will be a choice. The *Wiccan* parent, at least, knows that that smaller being is a human being, and he has choices, too, even if they are more restrictive.

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Puberty: Womanhood, Manhood

While we raise our children, we look forward to the trials of puberty, and start from the moment of birth to teach respect for the sexes, self-control and responsibility. One example, in a Book of Shadows of a modern trad, reads: "At the age of about five, a child should be given something to take care of, something little, like a hamster, or a goldfish. If the child doesn't do what is needed to take care of the animal, demand it, and, if, after a few years, the child shows responsibility, you may wish to give him/her something larger. By puberty, the child understands that taking care of things requires work, and you've done a great set-up for a frank talk."

We need to teach our children from day one that having sex means "giving up" childhood to an extreme degree. Responsibility, self-control, and the demands of a sexual life are taught in our parables and myths, and the punishments for things like rape and excess in those myths are swift, severe and memorable. A coming of age ceremony, designed by the parents and child, should take place when the parties decide that the child is ready to be a self-responsible adult. The actual moment of transition aids a child in the "am I too young to?" decisions, and knowledge of a parents respect and expectations changes the dynamic of the relationship completely.

Unlike Christianity, Wicca teaches automatic response, "if you do this, you will be punished now," and "this life matters, don't mess it up." By showing our children that they are responsible for their actions and they are accountable for them from day one, we teach control and responsibility. By teaching compassion, forgiveness and the ability to change, we teach divinity. It is easy for us to believe, "I am God(dess)," but what we have to teach is, "So are you."

* * *

The Wiccan Marriage

The Wiccan Marriage, or Handfasting, is a vital part of the religious lives of thousands of Wiccans worldwide who have decided to be

joined in the eyes of the Goddess and God rather than in a civil ceremony. Few Wiccan priest/priestesses are truly licensed to do civil marriages, and a secondary wedding takes place at the justice of the peace or similar office for many Wiccan couples. The Handfasting is more than a document, however, and many choose a handfasting which marries them in the eyes of the Gods, but not the civil marriage, freeing them for non-traditional marriages that the state may not approve of.

When The Defense of Marriage Act was before the United States Congress, many congressmen and women received a version of the following letter from Wiccan Clergy. The letter demonstrates the ideals commonly held by Wiccan/Pagan clergy concerning same-sex marriage:

To whom it may concern:

Given the nature of the continuing debate for and against the legal marriage of Gays and Lesbians, it seems important to define what marriage is. Some people want to define marriage within strict Judeo-Christian terms. The flaw in this is that people of any religion may be joined together regardless of their religion. Marriages within Jewish and Christian faiths, within Islam and Universalism, Catholicism and Atheism are all recognized by the state, even though marriage within these belief systems all mean different things. To define marriage within one religious group, to define marriage from a particular Biblical translation, or translations, as the "Defense of Marriage Act" and similar documents attempt to do, is to deny the validity of all marriages not performed within the religious sect or sects from which this definition comes. DOMA and the like should be seen as an act not against "merely" Gay and Lesbian couples, but as an act against Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Atheism, and any religion or belief system that defines marriage with any rules above and beyond the mere union of man and woman as defined in DOMA's framers' version of Christianity.

Gay and Lesbian couples have been being married religiously by ministers for years, and some religions, such as Wicca, a religion recognized by the United States (most notably in The Armed Forces' guide for Chaplains,) have objected to DOMA not because of a secret "gay agenda" but because DOMA actively promotes denying ministers of certain faiths their right to have many

of their marriages recognized by the State, effectively denying tens of thousands of people their freedom of religion. No rational person expects religions that are against homosexuality to begin to hand out marriages between same-sex couples. As always, each religion has the right to determine the qualifications to be married within their church, but the State does not have the right to limit those qualifications beyond expecting that all participants are not having their rights violated by the church. A religious marriage is a contract between those being married and the church that is marrying them, a sacred contract that is limited only by the religion's rules and knowledge that all parties are capable (i.e.: Sound of mind, of legal age and not under duress) of consenting to that contract. It is against both the letter of the Constitution and the spirit of it, in essence, DOMA tells the public that only those religions of which certain people approve may be given the full protection of the First amendment.

You don't have to agree with Same-sex marriage to disagree with DOMA, but the carefully practiced division of the public into "good, moral folk" and "godless liberals" must be seen through like the tactic that it is, a mere method of telling people what's good to think and what's bad to think. My morality, my thoughts and my beliefs are not regulated by or registered with the Congress of the United States, and although I disagree with the tactics of secession "Freemen" groups, I am more than willing to fight the Government if they ever expect me to join their church, think their way and do their bidding like a mindless Jesse Helms clone. I am an American, patriotic and proud of my country, and I will not watch the Constitution be destroyed in the name of "defending marriage."²⁵

There are two main types of Handfasting, mostly based on practices of the ancient Celts. The first, which appears to be unique to Wicca in the modern age, is the "Year and a Day" handfasting, which is renewed (or not) every year and one day. The commitment here is not temporary, but, at the end of the period if the couple cannot honestly say that they still love each other, they begin proceedings to fix or end the marriage. A Priest(ess) will advise participants in this ceremony to not have children unless a contract stipulating custodial rights is created in advance.

The Second handfasting is much like the Judeo-Christian marriage, and is for "As long as love shall last," as opposed to "till death do us part." The reasoning behind this is two-fold, firstly, Wiccans believe a marriage without love is a sham, and should be dissolved as soon as possible. Secondly, Wiccans don't believe that death "parts" lovers, and many Wiccan widow(er)s talk about "feeling" their spouse, who often convinces them to "move on." Sometimes, a year and a day handfasting is required before a priestess will hand fast a couple indefinitely.

In order to be married in Universal Eclectic Wicca, and many other Wiccan traditions, a couple is asked to interview with the Priest(ess,) first as a couple, and then individually. The purpose of this is not so that the Priest(ess) can veto the handfasting, but so that (s)he can find hidden issues the couple may have, and help them decide if they are really ready to "take the leap."

An old tradition currently being adopted by the masses, the pre-nuptial agreement has existed in Wicca as "The Contract" for time eternal. This is fairly self-explanatory, a couple sits down and hashes out the contingencies for divorce and the rules for marriage. Part of the Contract is the Mediation Commitment, a statement in which the couple makes the commitment to take any decision that alters the contract to mediation with a neutral third party, preferably the priest(ess) or coven scribe who helped write the contract.

Once that is taken care of, the marriage takes place, often incorporating any number of varied traditions into each ceremony. Commonest is the "broom jumping" of poverty/slavery weddings, with the broom then decorated and hung on the couple's door to announce their handfasting to the community. Handfasting actually takes its name from the act of binding the couple's hands with their cords or a special handfasting cord, often woven from two-colored fabric. Many priest(esse)s actually schedule "check-ups" to insure a healthy marriage, and take a much more active role than most clergy.

Choosing a "civil" marriage to back up your spiritual one is a delicate choice. On one hand, you gain a document and recognition that you are married by the government, this can help taxwise and insurance-wise

and is especially helpful if you wish to adopt your spouse's name, however, the primary purpose of the marriage certificate is to make money, and by choosing to be married by a religious ceremony and not a civil one you are not only saving money, but lodging a form of protest. Until such time as alternative marriages are recognized by the government, a "civil" marriage is spiritually worthless.

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The Wiccan Divorce

Inevitably, any discussion of marriage needs a discussion of divorce, and Wiccan marriages are no different. A good point about having a non-state marriage is that the divorce fees, which generally have a minimum of one hundred dollars, are avoided. This does not mean that the marriage just picks up and dissolves. Many psychologists recommend a "ceremony" for divorce to aid in the grief process that divorce causes, and more and more Judeo-Christian churches (those recognizing divorce) are adopting them. We've always had one, and it's called a Handparting.

Handparting, like Handfasting, isn't taken lightly, although many Handfastings that fall apart "peacefully" don't truly need to be parted, and the couple goes their merry ways, simply affirming "it's over" to all parties involved. With a Year and a Day Handfastings, it is customary to call the friends, clergy and family and tell them you've opted not to renew your Handfasting at the end of the term, a Handparting is only done in matters of extreme difficulty in these cases, and is made more difficult when the parties don't follow their wedding contracts. In long-term Handfastings, the participants are encouraged to Handpart for psychological purposes, but again, if an easier form of "breaking it off" works for you, than do it.

I feel it necessary to say here that marriages, Wiccan, Catholic, whatever, are held together by words and love, and that no magickal act makes a couple inseparable. People change, and the person you handfast with may not be the same person ten years from now. As we

grow, and change, handpartings happen, and filling your handfasting with talk of "eternity" and "through all our lives and incarnations," is damning any possible Handparting to increased difficulty. Earlier, I mentioned "plan B's," this is another example of one, and jeopardizing it in advance doesn't make marriage anymore secure. If you love each other so much that you wish to be together until the world ends, then stay in love, and be handfasted, "as long as love shall last." Who needs a greater time period than that?

Many Wiccan Priest(esse)s expect a trial separation of those they've Handfasted, a sort of "trying it on for size," similar in makeup and reasoning to the trial Handfasting, this prevents unnecessary Handpartings. Handpartings that are finalized require an interview, contract and mediation, just like the Handfasting, and is taken very seriously by the Wiccan population, but unlike a state divorce, a Handparting can easily be tailored individually, allowing the participants more leeway in their decisions. Often, a Handparted couple with children will stay together as friends under the same roof to raise their children together, with a good contract, respect and prayer, anything is possible.

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The later years

In many traditions, passage rites mark the passage into later maturity, but some feel that the emphasis placed on "cronings" and similar rituals lessen the experiences for people at other stages of life, or even discredit those people. My own teacher, newly young at 64, flat out refused a "croning" by her coven, saying "age is but a pair of dates and the length between them, and if cronings are indicative of experience, why offer it now, not ten or twenty years ago?" If a person desires one, and is willing to seek out the ritual in a tradition that "officially" provides such rites, then the priest(ess) should assist in all ways possible, but should refrain from recommending it. One person, upon recommending it of Bell Coven's oldest member received a sandal

upside the head, shot from about 30 feet by someone who most people would describe as a "little old lady" with perfect accuracy, who screeched, "call me a crone again and the other one's going somewhere worse." I *have* seen women who revel in the title, but since UEW teaches that experience and active learning, not age, create wisdom, much of the "point" of such rituals is lost.

* * *

"The Final Ritual"

Perhaps at no time in our life does religion count more than the moment when we realize we're dying. I remember a dream I had, early on in my studies, I was in the elevator of a futuristic building (I despise elevators) and had gotten in at the top floor with a Catholic priest and another Wiccan. At the moment the doors closed, the cable snapped and we were all going to die in five minutes. The other Wiccan and I immediately prayed to either be rescued or die painlessly, then I turned to the priest and confessed everything I'd ever done that was non-Catholic in my life (I don't know how, but I condensed it to a few phrases, and, upon confession demanded a really quick penance (the priest said that conversion was enough,) and I was "forgiven." Then, I woke up.

I immediately went to my priestess, near sobbing, I didn't understand what my subconscious was saying, was I not really Wiccan? Was I a closet Catholic? What happened after I was forgiven, did I die? She told me to meditate on the meaning of that dream before bed, and sure enough I had the same dream, only we were rescued mere seconds after the dream had ended before. As we got out, the other Wiccan (my conscious) looked at me, confused, "you've one of the most devout Wiccans I know, what happened in there?" she demanded. The dream me thought for a moment, then said, "well, if we had died, and *he* was right, I saved my butt, if he was wrong, I know our Gods would understand." The priest came up to us at that point, and the dream me felt embarrassed for having said that in front of him. I tried to stutter

out an apology, but he brushed it off, saying, "That's okay, everyone is Catholic right before they die," then I woke up again.

I've told numerous students this dream, finding that while aspects of it were fairly unique, similar issues had been brought up in the dreams and dialogs of numerous Wiccans. Confession, and the idea that a few words and actions will settle all of our post-life problems, is very appealing. Wicca is one of the few religions that doesn't say, beyond a shadow of a doubt, what happens after we die. In general, Wiccans believe in reincarnation, that the soul goes on to be "born again" into a new body, to learn new lessons and continue its learning quest, but we don't promise that we have the answer. There is simply very little proof. Out of body experiences of Christians sometimes include women instead of Jesus, and Jesus has appeared in the OBE's of Wiccans, always smiling and embracing them, so even the "beyond a shadow of doubt" beliefs of nouvelle Christians don't ring true. I'll put it simply, we don't know.

To prevent the detriment of the growing graveyard, many Wiccans choose cremation after donation as their method of choice once they die. This allows the parts of the body that can give life to go on, and the parts that cannot are reduced by the cremation process. The ashes are traditionally mixed with soil in which a tree is planted, many people choose to have a plate placed near or on the tree, or a memorial bench with an inscription beside the tree. The actual planting ceremony is written by friends, family, and occasionally pre-written by the planter. One is included in Book Three: *A Book Of Light*. It's best to look into the legality of this in your area before you perform a planting, in many places, an urn is required and in others the ashes may be planted in a graveyard, but not on private land.

Chapter Nine

Ethics, Situational Ethics and the "T" word.

Earlier, we talked of the Five Points of Wiccan belief, and forging a personal morality. Ethics are beliefs, morals and teachings all rolled into one, a sort of catch-all phrase for what we believe to be true. Occasionally we ask, "Is something Ethical?" but ethical merely means that it follows, or is like ethics, and ethics can be bad or good, so we need a personal definition of "ethical" in hand before we try to determine whether or not something is ethical.

One definition of Ethical contains only those ethics that are "Good," or "Right," but the difference between "good" and "right" raises the question of the worth of wondering "what is ethical?" again. With these statements well in hand, a student once leveled a lecture of mine. "Why talk about ethics at all in a discourse on Wicca?" he asked, "It's covered by the Five Points, isn't it?"

To a degree, I've already said all there is to say about ethics, and put it in such a way that you can glean the rest from personal experience. The Five Points of Wiccan Belief are a circle, The Rede implies the Karmic Law implies Self-Responsibility implies Constant Improvement implies Attunement implies The Rede, constantly rotating, developing new levels of interdependency and individual strength. To a degree, any discussion could end there, "these are the five Points, boom, you're done," yet the feeling of "something missing," would continue.

In the past, I have asked people, "which is better, to be good or right?" This is one of the prime questions of Wiccan belief, often asked by Wiccans of Christians. We cannot comprehend that a God would set down a set of rules that were restrictive to the human race, and condemn that person for a matter of semantics. To an extreme degree, the ethical Wiccan believes in right and wrong, and in what we like to call "Basic Human Truths." Basic Human Truths are those things that nearly every culture considers right, beyond a shadow of a doubt, things like helping those in need and respecting everyone equally. Cultures with fewer Basic Truths, and thus fewer basic rights, are usually ruled by the corrupted few, and the subjugated masses are miserable, regardless of religion.

To the Christian, settling North America, the indigenous peoples were "wrong" because they weren't Christian, and when starving Puritans were helped by natives, the reasoning the Plymouthites gave was along the lines of "God is acting through them," or, "they've learned to be Christian by watching us." More likely, the Puritans were recipients of a Basic Truth, "You don't let your neighbor starve, no matter how crazy he is." While Wicca is pacifistic, most Wiccans believe in the upholding of truths, in basic human rights, and most of us would willingly die if it would save or return the human rights of another person. There is a large population of military Wiccans, who are asked "how can you be a part of the industrial war machine and still be Wiccan?," and this is simply not fair. The military Wiccans are fighting for human rights and they deserve our respect, not our criticism, many of them do what we aren't brave enough to do for ourselves. As we grow, and our population swells, the minority of good-intentioned but judgmental Wiccans will need to unlearn their Puritanical traits and decide to be "good" instead of "right."

It IS better to be good, even if you're not right. It was better to kill Nazis to save Jews, Rom, and everyone else imprisoned in World War Two than to allow the Nazis their right to condemn "criminals." Technically, many countries in World War Two weren't being "right" by fighting Hitler, it wasn't "our" business, but to be "good" we

needed to act, not in the name of God or Country, but in the name of Humanity. Humanity is something we all share. Admittedly, if a Vulcan starship pulled into the UN parking lot and said, "there are other worlds out there," the rest of humanity would become a lot more unified, but I don't predict that for another few years, if ever, so if we can begin thinking on a planetary level now, think of the welcoming committee.

* * *

Politics

In at least two books on Wicca, I've seen the question, "Is Wicca Political?," both times, this was answered "No." This is WRONG. Wicca is a religion and religion, courtesy of the Radical Right, is now political. As Wiccans, we have to get involved in the preservation of free speech and the right to practice our religion, the salvation of the earth and keeping prayer OUT of public schools. We need to vote, because no vote means no voice, and our voice, shouting, crying or singing, needs to be heard.

* * *

Situational Ethics

When "desperate times call for desperate measures," we invoke what are called Situational ethics. In Wicca, Situational ethics often include actions that break the Wiccan Rede, because the Wiccan Rede is so all-encompassing. I have, you have, and we will in the future. There is an actual way of evaluating the situation along Wiccan guidelines, developed by myself, Tamryn and Lady Martia of Bell Coven; it is called "The Wiccan Situational Law."

Wiccan Situational Law:

The Rede is the law of the Gods, and in our growth and education, we are presented with the occasional moment where the Rede clearly does not apply. These moments are:

- 1: When Harming one saves many.

- 2: When Harming the Self saves many.
- 3: In cases where a person's justifiable Will may be against the law, or the Spirit of the Law.
- 4: When Basic truths/Human Rights are being Violated.
- 5: Other moments similar to those above not fully defined but still containing "Just cause."

Actions defined by Situational Ethics must be taken only with full knowledge and acceptance of The Law of Return and the Ethic of Self Responsibility, and are the actions of an individual and group actions must be decided on an individual basis.

Most Wiccan Clergy are grilled on Situational Ethics and are good people to talk to when the decision just can't be made alone. No Wiccan Clergy member would EVER try to make your decision for you, however, so go with the knowledge that the decision will be yours.

* * *

Teaching, the Dreaded T word

The decision to "widen the circle" by teaching is not to be taken lightly. It's very easy to get "burned" by people who practice their form of Wicca without the benefit of morality. Expect at least one student in every bunch who is going to steal your books and glean no amount of morality from you. If you don't get one, consider yourself lucky, and if you get more than one, reevaluate how you are finding your students, or maybe your karma. I can say happily that such students never STAY in Wicca, because their antics aren't condoned and the instant "wave your magic wand," type of power they desire isn't found here (or anywhere else, although some groups advertise it.)

Teaching is a part of learning, so teaching in order to learn is important in Wicca, and a group of equals in a sharing circle is as good, if not better than the a lecture set up. You are "good enough" to teach when you feel ready to, so try, experiment, and if you fall, get back up. Many

Universalist Unitarian churches rent rooms, and I recommend teaching outside your house (classes at home can be disastrous,²⁶) so you may wish to look into such things.

Networking, sometimes called "Web Weaving," is important to anyone teaching, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with asking a student for references and checking them. Always keep a record of the students who've burned you, and warn anyone who asks about them. Feel free to use euphemism instead of accusation. "Well, all my books went missing when he was here," won't cause a lawsuit and "he stole all my books," might.

Never start a class with "friends" if it's going to be the sit and teach type, because the stresses of the teacher-student and "friend" relationship can be straining. Friends are friends, not students, so teach them as equals and let them teach you. My experience has taught me however, that when a student decides to become a teacher (s)he knows exactly how (s)he wants it done, and no amount of advice can change that. that being said, I'll let you do as you will, then, with one last warning from an old Book of Shadows, "When thrice asked of secrets or Magick by the same student, when rushed towards those things mystical and potentially powerful, remove that student like a cancer from your class, lest all your students be unbalanced by greed."

Chapter Ten

Magick

(I should mention here that Magick and Wicca are not inseparable, some Wiccans use Magick, some don't. The Gods give us tools, this is one of them.)

What is Magick? Well, there is the Wiccan stock answer (let me pull it here from my bag of standard trinkets...) "Magick is the art of getting results."²⁷ Of course, there is the more impressive "Magick is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will," of Crowley's *Magick in Theory and Practice*, but unless you wish to impress that really cute Metaphysicist at work the first one's easier. I chose to define the Magic used in Wicca with Wicca in its definition "Wiccan Magick is change, directed by the Self, empowered by the Will and decided by Morality." An old name for alchemists and Mages alike is transmuter, one who transmutes (alters) one thing into another. The practice of Magick is taking one thing, and creating another.

There are four broad groupings of Magick in Wicca, along with Ceremonial and High Magick, which, while done by many Wiccans in ritual, are not religious in nature. These are Celebratory Magick, Ritual Magick, Healing Magick and personal magicks.

Celebratory Magick, Magick done in ritual to honor the Gods, is advanced prayer, as is Ritual Magick, which is the Magickal aspect of our rituals and ceremonies (to clarify, Ritual Magick is done at ceremonies,

and Ceremonial Magick has nothing to do with Wiccan ritual practice.) Healing Magicks are self-explanatory, and Personal Magicks combine Celebratory, Healing and Ritual Magicks with "lesser" or "low" Magick for personal reasons. A example of Personal Magicks in a non-Wiccan setting are novenas published in community newspapers. They usually invoke St. Jude, and follow a ritual whereby the novena is prayed for a set number of days, then published, and the prayer comes true. This is a bit "hokey" for most Wiccans, but I know of two Catholo-Wiccan trads using Catholic saints that use novenas much as other Wiccans use wish-burying and similar rituals.

Celebratory Magick usually is power raised in the circle, directed toward the earth for its own usage, or directed toward a god or goddess as a sort of token with a prayer. Think of Celebratory magic and regular prayer like a delivery service, anyone can deliver a telegram (prayer), but Celebratory Magick is like delivering a singing telegram, complete with flower bouquet and four-part harmonies. We wish to show praise, glory, welcome and love for our Gods...how welcome is an intoned ceremony, complete with stifled yawns and rampant boredom. The Gods want us to be happy, to survive to the fullest and best of our abilities. "If I can dance wildly beneath the full moon, the sand between my toes and my shouts of joy echoing in the night air, how divine, how perfect, how holy."

There are primarily two branches or "sciences" of Magick used in all Wiccan Magick, Sympathetic Magick, which involves doing a symbolic action to achieve a real action, and Dynamic Magick, which involves using the body's powers in a non-standard way. A few Sympathetic Charms are given in part three, but a good lesson on sympathetic Magick can be found in any discourse on Wicca, and I'll leave talk of it to those with expertise. Psychic abilities, Healing touches, etc., are mind/body dynamics, as are all of the "untapped" powers locked within the Self.

The "Self," or "Integrated Total Self," which we spoke of earlier, is the entirety of the mentality and personality of a being. "Will," "True Will" or "Total Will," is the force of the Self. One of my students came

up with the term "ITS Will," to remember the two and their relationship. You must understand that "The Will is the slave of the Self, and has no limitations."²⁹ With that in hand, and a healthy dose of morality, the Wiccan improves his/her life as much as (s)he can. Strength of Will improves the level of can, as does belief, but it seems that, as you grow in Will, you need less and find more enjoyment in the smaller things, so it's a bit self-defeating.

I had the good fortune to "Fall in" with a group of Metaphysicists, nicknamed "the old men" because most of them were over 50 and argued over Metaphysics as easily as they argued over Talmud, and since, of the eight, seven were Jewish and the eighth a self-proclaimed heretic, Talmudic arguments came easily. Like a kid in a fantasy novel, I ducked into a coffee shop to get out of the rain and heard this whispered argument in the corner where four of the men were sitting. Being nosy, I got a drink, sat at the table next to them, put on my headphones (which were off) and pretended to read my book, listening intently.

Now, as a teenager, I'd tried Satanism, I think most of us do when we realize "conventional" religion doesn't fit us. From there, I went into a very "dark" neo-goth Crowley sect and wore all black, but I was the only female there, and I quickly realized that being the love object of a batch of intelligent but wasted (in more ways than one) teenyboppers was not my idea of study, and I'd read in passing more Crowley than they'd read in "serious study." At the time of the "meeting" with the old men I was absolutely lusting for intelligent metaphysical conversation, but my tea was gone, and I had to go back to the counter for another.

Providence, or maybe the rituals praying for serious discussion, stepped in, and while I was at the counter, one of "the Old Men" told the woman they were out of sugar at his table. She was busy as hell, so I grabbed the sugar carrier from a nearby table and told her "Finish what you're doing, I'll give them this one." I had several pieces of jewelry made by a boyfriend in copper and I was wearing a thick bracelet on my right arm with various metaphysical phrases and symbols of protection upon it, and a few choice phrases from metaphysical tomes.³⁰

I purposely stretched my arm a few inches from the guy's nose to place the sugar carrier on their table, repeating "notice it, notice it, notice it," inside my head, and sure enough, he saw it, and asked me about it. I asked him if he knew what it meant, and he said yes, and asked if I did, and I translated. I'll tell you right now, a few nights before I had Jonah, a good friend and Clansman, write the inscription out for me, because I could not read the Script. I bluffed my way in, though, with a few choice Crowley quotes, a bit of Hermetic philosophy, and a mental note to "do my homework" if they invited me back. I was asked to pull up a chair...it was the first of several times. I learned that year three vital lessons, Magick **works** and as a rule, Metaphysicists are sexist pigs, and the older they are the worse it is.

If you wish to do "more" magically than the simple healing charms and such, begin your "training" by fixing the damaged Will and the damaged Self. Get rid of your addictions (smoking, too) by affirming that you Will to not have them. If you find you cannot quit, your Will is weaker than the addiction. I've been "hooked" on things before, and by inflicting my Will, I stopped. Anyone can, it's just a measure of the ethic of Self-Responsibility. It's willpower, and if I have one thing, it's willpower. I've "detoxed" people by going for the ego, and if anyone out there is addicted I'll tell you right here that I'm a coward, a great, shivering coward who cries at movies and is so agoraphobic that the forest at night scares me half-witless, and I was strong enough to quit...what's your excuse?

Once your Will is beginning to heal, test it and strengthen it with little affirmations of Will, like conquering fears. Most of us are walking wounded, by affirming the Will, you heal some wounds and keep from becoming walking dead. I'll warn you right now that as you grow and learn in metaphysics, you will begin to detest it. The stronger you become the more you know, the more you know the less you like. I cannot stress enough how much better it is to gain enough power metaphysically to have Total Self and Total Will and choose to use them only for inside improvement. I've seen so many good friends go into the "Death" of knowledge that I wouldn't wish it on anyone.

Many of us, strong Will or not, don't live through that stage of development, and frankly, I think most of us don't want to.

If you use your Will outside of a religious and moral context, it's not Wiccan, and a decision may come as you grow in Metaphysics that morality isn't a question anymore, but a hindrance. I would never be so bold as to tell anyone that they are wrong, but if it gets to this point, take a mental "vacation" for a few weeks, do no Metaphysics and no ritual, then read over your journal(s.) You may find that your changes are the work of an outside force, maybe a "teacher" and that you need to adjust your path. Balance reigns supreme in Metaphysics and nature, and a slow descent into darkness or over-zealous goodness will begin to cause harm.

As we integrate our Self, we need to improve all of it to stay "balanced." Just as you wouldn't hammer a nail with a rusted hammer with a loose head and a broken handle, doing Magick with an imperfect tool (Self) is dooming the act to imperfection. Improve the body, improve the mind, improve the Karma, improve it all. It's not easy, but remember Constant Improvement. An essential if you plan to incorporate Magick into ritual is that you know what you believe and why, and that you've answered many of your basic life-questions.

* * *

Ritual Magick

There are three Magickal acts in most Wiccan Ritual (and for detail beyond what I give, I suggest *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*, chapter 11, and on Magick in general, Crowley's *Magick in Theory and Practice* is indispensable.) These three acts are Casting the Circle (detailed in Chapter Four, and in Part three of this work, named "A Book of Light,") Forming the Cone of Power and Goal-directed release, and Drawing Down the Moon/Sun. Both Drawing Down and Cone of Power Magicks require your confidence in the Circle you've cast, so practice.

The Cone of Power is raised energy focused on a point above the exact center of the cast circle. The Energy may be raised by chanting, dancing, toneing or any other form of power raising that works for you (there are five ways listed in Part Two of this book labeled: "A Grimoire".) Once the cone is begun, the energy is increased and increased until it eventually explodes from the tension point of the top of the circle and is directed, usually by visualization, towards a goal, either something personal, like the healing of a friend or the acquisition of a new job, or something esoteric and spiritual like "gifting" it to the Gods or the Earth. By using visualization, imagination or well-trained "other sight" one can see the power as a field of swirling light which fills the circle and is contained by the Metaphysical boundaries of the Circle and the Will of the Circle's caster(s.)

Drawing Down The Moon and Drawing Down The Sun are trad-related rituals in which the Gods are invoked into a person. Usually this involves an elaborate ritual, with the reading of one of the versions of the Charge of the Goddess, and similar male charges are read for the solar versions, and the "gods and goddesses" that speak within the ceremony are from books, but I have seen the occasional Ecstatic Wiccan group where the person who has the Gods "drawn into" them actually seems to "channel" another

being who speaks to the coven, and once, on a Beltane night, Lady Martia, a very respectable and not easily excitable Wiccan Priestess of some forty years, began to recite the Charge and was seen to change drastically before about thirty people, and cease reading it. A surprised look on her face, this priestess told us how pleased she was that we kept our rites that evening, and told a coven member who was infertile that he and his wife would have a child by Imbolc, whereupon the priestess fainted, and didn't come 'round for several minutes.

I suppose if I were reading that, I couldn't believe it, but I was there, and I believe (as does Mart,) that we met a Priestess of old that night, (no one thinks it was a Goddess, although I've heard stories of Goddesses and astral beings jumping in to ceremonies and interrupting them to give important news, warnings and the like,) and she

approved, so we must be doing something right! (Their child, a boy, was conceived that night or thereabouts and born January 20th, 1995)

Magick, like any science, requires ethics, and practice without ethics or in the form of Magick for Magick's sake may result in any number of problems. As with any science, use caution in your experimentation and start small.

Chapter Eleven

Religious Unity and Community

Studies within the Second Circle also focus on the part that Wicca and the Wiccan play in the greater society. A key element of this is the extension of Wicca beyond personal religion and into societal religion. What this means is, as we become more active **religiously**; we have to become more active **socially**. Like so-called "Mainstream" religion, as Wicca grows (and it is growing,) it needs to provide more for its internal community. I've seen many the case of priest(ess) burnout from Wiccan Clergy trying to provide the same services that the other religions provide without the benefit of a huge congregation and "required" donations. Priest(esse)s are already our counselors, and most of them provide other services related to their secular professions. I know of Wiccan clergy who are midwives, doctors, lawyers, bankers and architects, and our community is fairly good at internal referral, but other needs met by larger churches are denied to us.

I've been homeless, and had to sleep in a shelter, and get my meals served with a side of Jesus, and let me tell you, it made it hard to not feel oppressed. I've had to grovel at the feet of their God to stay alive and feel nauseous to my very soul while pretending to pray, so housing the Wiccan homeless and feeding the Wiccan poor are very real concerns of mine. In the Christian community, "Taking care of your own" is a status quo, but too often we believe that we do not have the

resources needed to provide. The Wiccan community is huge, and those resources are there.

An example from real life is a woman we'll call "Sara," who had an old barn in the back forty which connected to the road a mile up from her house. "Yolanda" was a woman with three kids and an abusive husband, and was an expert at redecorating, and had learned such things as sheetrocking and laying floors. Zach, Sara's husband was an electrician, and had rewired the barn, which already had a hookup with the house lines, and with Sara's help, he altered the plumbing, putting in a second toilet and a shower upstairs and they created this wonderful tiled bathtub from an old water trough and put it in the large tack area of the barn, demolishing the little bathroom to its left and creating an expansive bathroom complete with a stained glass window made of whole old bottles set in a panel of plastic, (The broken and then sanded shell of one that faces outside now houses a bird's nest you can watch from inside without disturbing the birds.) Yolanda and Zach spent the summer vacation laying floors while Yolanda's husband was away on assignment, and that winter Zach added a new furnace to his own house, using the old to heat the barn, which they insulated and turned into one of the most gorgeous four bedroom barn conversion houses I've ever had the pleasure to be in. Yolanda, after a fight that left her with a sprained wrist, black eye and worse, packed up the kids one morning and moved in, finally having a safe place from which to settle their divorce, tucked away on a back road that friends could monitor once the restraining order was issued. After things were settled, Yolanda and her kids moved to a larger house in a city, but to this day Wiccan (and Gay and Lesbian) women and men fleeing abuse have stayed in the barn, earning their keep by doing chores and working the land. Zach and Sara's large covens provide food and necessities to the barn, and have a network to provide aid when needed, and this has caused the covens to grow, even in a conservative area.

The total cost of refurbishing the barn, with donated and recycled supplies was about two thousand dollars. Divided between the forty-two members of their two covens, this came to about 48 dollars apiece over

six months. I'm not saying we all need to build barn houses, but how hard would it be to start a food basket program for impoverished coveners? We cannot expect the Christian Churches to pick up tabs for us, although dire circumstances may turn us to them, and certainly any program of ours would welcome any in need, not just Wiccans...without strings.

Providing help to our own in need is especially important as the federal government pulls the rug out from under aid programs, and as churches tighten their belts you can bet that anyone not belonging to mainstream religion is going to slip through the safety net. Since we don't "recruit" like other religions, Wicca needs to take care of its members or risk eventually losing more than we gain.

* * *

Part of being Wiccan is dealing with the ideas of the mainstream churches and healing old wounds. I, and a great number of my coven members choose to call ourselves "Wiccans" not "Witches." This doesn't mean we practice a different religion, or that we're going with the stereotype of the Wicked Witch of the West, and it doesn't mean we're "weak" or selling out. I am not a Witch; I've said that before. I don't even *really* like the term Wiccan, but Wittan, the only known alternative, isn't recognized or desirable, so I take the lesser of two evils. If you study the word, and look at serious secular discourses on its meanings, (not pop etymologies) you'll probably find that "Witch" and "Wiccan" don't come from *Wei*q, to shape or *Witan*, from whence we get "wit," but *Vincere/Vico*, meaning victory, from which we get "victim," "vice," and a bunch of other double-sided words. It is not uncommon for a one-or two-syllable word to exist in many languages with different meanings. There is no way to tell that the words Witch or Wicca came from one culture or the other. Having studied the use of the word in southern England and heard Wicca pronounced by Cornish and Welsh witches, I am convinced that the Latin-derivation, through *Vicca* (pronounced Weeee-cha), is the most likely one. It is

easy to forget that southern Great Britain was a Roman *provincia*, and that London itself, and most of the modern southern ports, were established by Romans. Taken in that light, I find it hard to believe the word "Wee-cha" which is unpronounceable in Gaelic, came from anything but *Vicce*, in Latin. I know this concept, that Wicca and Witch came from the same root word as victim, is disturbing to some people, but I would not state so unless I believed it with every molecule of my being.

When you say Witch, you fill the unknowing ones' heads full of stereotypes, when you say "Wiccan," which is probably just a variation on an older word for the same thing, they either ask "what?" or have heard of it. Why bother with baggage we have little claim to? Even those executed "for Witchcraft" were rarely Witches! It'd be like the Gay/Lesbian, Polish and Rom/Romani/Gypsy populations saying "we're Jewish" because millions of them were killed in Nazi concentration camps too. Yes, the persecution of the Burning Times was bad, yes, it was an excuse to root out non-Christians, but most of the people practicing what we'd recognize as ancestors of today's earth religions were spared because of talents they'd perfected from day one. Belief creates reality, we need to cease believing doors will slam and start turning the knobs!

I remember a young Wiccan getting so angry at a person for using the word "hag" to describe an ancient Russian Witch character in a literature discussion group that she turned nearly purple with rage. She continued to darken throughout the entire discussion, because the witch was portrayed as old, ugly, mean, and child eating. After stewing for a few moments, she let loose on us a barrage of hateful speech, declaring we, along with the Brothers Grimm, L.Frank Baum and numerous others were campaigning under a banner of Christian propaganda against the 'ancient and noble religion of Wicca'. She left in a huff, and the members of the group collectively turned to me, who they knew to be a Wiccan. One member, a Baptist, said, "Now you know how *I* feel when Fred Phelps calls himself a Christian."

I bring this up because as a modernist, I am constantly facing people, mostly young, mostly new to Wicca, who act in extraordinarily

bad form because they've bought into the metaphorical history of Wicca, instead of the actual history, and because when they reclaimed the word "Witch" for themselves, they assumed a switch had been thrown and the world now used the term in their reclaimed mode alone. This example of religious identity gone shockingly wrong is to be expected if authors and teachers do not attempt to be as clear as possible about where metaphor ends and reality begins. None of the great feminist authors reclaiming the word Witch for the past twenty years have claimed that the other forms of it should be swept away. This is a pure leap of logic committed by zealous new practitioners alone. One need only surf the net to find people campaigning that dictionaries, encyclopedias and textbooks remove the word witch in its historical usage and replace it with a modern one. While it is admirable to desire to have Modern witchcraft listed in a dictionary definition of Witch, replacing the historical usage of it is nothing more or less than censorship and revisionism. Wiccans and Witches worth their salt do not practice censorship and revisionism. We understand that building a house on a fake foundation damages the entire house, and choose instead, to lay the smaller, but genuine foundation. We understand Wicca to be a modern religion, not an ancient one, and we've no need to claim otherwise to make it look more powerful, because we already see it is powerful.

Many Wiccans are exchristians, with all the issues, anger and frustration that ex-members of any faith have. Some of them act as detriments to the greater Wiccan culture by downtalking and destroying relationships with their former churches. A Wiccan with a balanced religious self can tell the difference between disagreeing with Christianity and being obnoxious. In the interest of tolerance, many of us won't call our Wiccan brothers and sisters on foul actions against Christianity. We must not accept anti-Christianity as a natural part of Wicca. We must, instead, be willing to reject Christianity as our faith, without rejecting it as a faith for others.

I was never Christian, and I liken it to Scrapple, a meat-product eaten in the region of the United States where I have been transplanted

for the past 4 years. The smell of it, the look, and the texture, as well as the composition, cornmeal, pig parts, grease, turn my stomach. I have sniffed it, researched it, and been told it was good by scrapple eaters, but I find it revolting and will always pass it by. Scrapple eaters cannot comprehend that I would not like their food. They look at me, and my big plate of wets and hot grilled coney³², and think me mad for not liking their food. Many Christians are the same way about their faith, completely not understanding why someone would not try it because they find it incredibly good. To me, it's as desirable as scrapple, and I'm sure my faith is as undesirable to them as theirs is to me. The difference is I don't go around trying to talk scrapple eaters out of their food, or Christians out of their faith. Only when they do it to me, do I have a problem with their practices. The rest of the time, I'm content to follow my path, while they follow theirs, and even act together when needed.

By asserting our religious selves, and acting in unison with other religions, instead of just contrary to them, Wiccans gain a voice. One politician I spoke to about school prayer (she was against it already,) said she had "not realized" the impact that such prayer would have on non-Judeo-Christian religions. The Radical "Conservative" Right says with one side of its mouth that a minority has the right to affect a change, and with the other side it tries to restrict all other minorities. Open your mouth and shout! We are here! We are ready! We're the Good Guys, too!

A pamphlet handed out to Fundamentalist Christians by our organization contained this phrase, "Once we've rid the world of child abuse, murder, rape, lack of respect, hunger and strife, then, if you still feel that way, you can try to convert us, but for now, let's get our priorities straight. If we can't work together toward the same goals, we can at least not hinder each other." Wiccans need to work side by side with those who agree with our causes, and prove that we don't have some vast "conversion agenda." To us, the idea that we're laying in wait to turn the reins of the world into the hands of some "feminist" overseer and indoctrinate children into sexless, nationless clones with mandatory

abortions and sex-filled free love schools seems bizarre, even insane, but there are vast numbers of people who actually believe this! Perhaps you've even accidentally picked up their books or perused their websites? If you have, you understand that much of the PR that Wicca gets is created by those who would be our enemies, and that wonderful books like those of Scott Cunningham and others that should be read by non-Wiccans aren't! A good part of this is this idea of the "New Age" I spoke of earlier. It is a figment; a thing dreamed up to classify us as fads, a way that those who hate us use to illustrate Wicca, classing it as a "Pet Rock," something that they can ignore because in a few years it will be gone. As we grow and swell in numbers, as our secrecy ends, as we lay metaphorical claim to the pre-Christian past and show that we are not the New Age, but a modern religion influenced by an Old Age coming out of hiding, we can ask "Who's the Pet Rock now?"

Chapter Twelve

Narrowing Your Field within UEW

Although most people in Universal Eclectic Wicca remain in the Second Circle indefinitely, there are a few who choose to narrow their field and dedicate themselves to one or two aspects of The Craft. These people form the "Third Circle" of UEW, a collection of elders and craftsman that serve the greater community.

Unlike many Gardnerian-based traditions, UEW's Third Circle is not seen as the inevitable conclusion to studying Wicca. It is the Second Circle of UEW that corresponds to the "Third Degree" of other traditions, with all the powers that go with it. A Second Circle leader may even become a lay-minister, a type of non-ordained Priest(ess). The Third Circle is both difficult to attain and time-consuming to belong to, hardly the place for the majority of us, who need to keep real, secular jobs or starve away in the wilderness.

In order to become a part of the Third Circle, you are asked to make a unique contribution to Wicca as a whole. The creation of a Pagan Alliance, a series of articles in Pagan magazines requiring work and research and writing a book are all examples of "Unique contributions." The point of the contribution is not to further Wicca, but to expand the contributor. If one discovers nothing new in his/her creation, the point of it has been lost. A minimum of one year of mentored work on the project is required.

There are five “schools” within the Third Circle, called paths. Most people who narrow their field of study do it within these paths, The Way of The Scribe, The Way of The Bard, The Way of The Artisan, The Way of The Counselor and The Way of The Seeker. The Five Paths are similar to the techniques of at least one Druidic School, and were originally created by Tamryn Wyrmsstar and The Brothers of The Wolf Moon based on their experiences with several Druidic, Neo-Druidic, Shamanistic and Wiccan traditions which they originally incorporated into Wolf Moon Wicca, a defunct all-male trad which, in its literature said it “Picked up where the Dianic tradition dumped us.” Originally based on the thought that “every man has his own face,” the five paths are traced by Wolf Moon members to an ancient (not Gaelic) Fam-trad of surviving Druids who gathered in five groups of five and one “master circle” which consisted of the leaders of each group. The Five paths, Mage, Hunter, Scribe, Bard and Smith, reflected the practices, passed down father to son of these groups, and each member of the group was a master of their path.

In Universal Eclectic Wicca, we changed the “Mage” path, which supposedly has also been called “Alchemist,” to “Seeker” to represent the modern Alchemists who range from hard-core metaphysicists to lab technicians to investigative reporters, anyone who uses a science to discover something “new.” Likewise, “smith” was both outdated and too narrow a grouping, so we changed it to Artisan to include anyone who physically creates “stuff” with his talents. Scribe and Bard are relatively unchanged, although the subcategories of both are numerous from group to group, and “Hunter” didn’t sit well with the vegetarian membership, who were nice enough to abstain from our ritual hunts on sacred (preserved) land without faulting those who chose to participate. We added the category “counselor” because of a trend we noticed of people who seemed to be poor at leadership positions but great as listeners, and subdivided it into teacher and counselor.

The Scribe, called First Path, includes those who choose writing as their expression and those who organize the coven and its works into a unit. In “deep” ritual situations, the scribe’s robe is black, often

embroidered with multi-colored runes representing knowledge and Gods of the Mind and knowledge. The great work a scribe might do to join the path could range from transcribing ancient texts to digital format to creating a new masterpiece of Pagan literature to something completely different.

The Bard, called the Second Path, is the bringer of knowledge and the bearer of news. In ritual, the Bard is drummer, storyteller and any number of other expressive parts. I admit that I have a certain fondness for this path, having worn the Skyrobe at my first Third Circle ceremony. The Skyrobe, the ritual Bardic robe is a light blue, often with embroidered Celt/Pict-like knot work. Occasionally, a Coven led by a Bard chooses to practice one of the Bardic trads, and all of the members are trained toward the Third circle and the Skyrobe. This type of Bardic Wicca is just one of a number of Universal Eclectic Wicca subgroups, called "septs" and one of the infinite possibilities for specialization within the trad.

The Artisan, The Earthrobed Third Path, is the creator, the one who works with her/his hand to form the objects used in Ritual. The Artisan's talents range from chef to gardener to weaponsmith, and vary widely from person to person. One Artisan I know says he is a person who "gave his heart to Wicca years ago and now needs to plunge both hands into it and make it grow." Of Universal Eclectic Wicca Third Circle members who consider themselves "Druid, non-Wiccan," just under one half are Artisans, most of the rest are Seekers.

The Path of The Seeker, the Fourth path, seems to attract the lion's share of Metaphysicists and "standard" scientists. In the trad from which we learned of the Seeker, he is the Mage, discovering new things to teach the coven. Two important subgroups currently are formed on The Seeker's Path, The Mage, one who has dedicated himself to Magick, and The Geomancer, one who has dedicated his Magick to the study/healing of the Earth. Another name for Geomancer is Seeker-druid, and was "added" by the initial members of Universal Eclectic Wicca, who, as I've said, brought a lot of their Druidism into their faith.

The youngest path in Universal Eclectic Wicca is The Path of The Counselor, which has existed for about seven years and is generating some excitement and reshuffling in the circles. Originally, a Counselor was an inactive priest(ess), but a large number of people appeared who wanted advisor or teacher positions but not leadership, and this Path appeared to us with them. Many Third Circle Counselors become non-ordained priests or advisor to a Priest. In Ritual situations where a coven has decided to use the traditional robe colors, counselors either wear deep, cobalt or navy blue or emerald green. The green represents the fertile mind sown by a teacher, the deep blue is a combination of Bard and Seeker, a person whose job it is to keep the community aware of the new developments and discoveries and use tales of history to help with present day situations.

I find it hard to believe in a tradition in which you cannot achieve a position without contacting a High Priest and traveling to undergo some rite in which you magically "become" what you know you already are. In Universal Eclectic Wicca, the Third Circle is the only "certified" Circle, and the reason for this is unfortunate, but simple. There are people out there who "claim" to have a degree but don't. I don't mean the people who belong to strange traditions or have trained themselves, I mean people who say, "I am a umpteenth-degree whatever with this tradition," without ever gaining that degree. In Universal Eclectic Wicca we ask that a person seeking a Certificate of the Third Circle be interviewed by a Priest(ess) and that that person sign a document that says that they will follow the Rules of Universal Eclectic Wicca. This can be done over the phone and by mail when needed. When The Association of Universal Eclectic Wicca Clergypersons has the person's signed Declaration of Intent and a copy or picture of his/her Unique contribution the priest(ess) receives a certificate, and their data is stored in a database. This system isn't perfect, but it does seem to make fraud a little less prevalent in Universal Eclectic Wicca than in some traditions I won't mention.

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On clergy

Universal Eclectic Wicca has three types of clergy, Lay Ministers, Elected Clergy and Ordained Priests. Regardless of title, all Clergy are elected by their coven, either in pairs or separately. Positions are held for a year and a day, with elections held the day a term runs out. Regardless of a person's clerical title, someone who is re-elected for ten years straight is said to be a "High" Priest(ess) **of that coven** and is expected to step down for at least a year and let another hold the reins, acting as an advisor to the coven's leader. Before a person can ask for a vote and be considered for the position, (s)he needs to prove that they haven't merely sat around "being" a priest(ess) and that they've provided a significant service to the coven. A leave of absence by a priest or priestess with a theological purpose, such as studying for a degree relevant to their position or writing the tradition's textbook allows "time off" for those holding the position of Priest(ess) without loss of title. Likewise, anyone who has ever held the title is still called a "priest(ess), although not many choose to do so.

Many Universal Eclectic Wicca Covens have no Third Circle Members, their leaders, Second Circle members who've been elected to the coven leadership are called "Lay-Ministers." A Lay-Minister can do everything a Priest(ess) can do except teach people above the Second Circle, perform civil Handfastings or mediate Handfasting contracts without supervision. The majority of UEW's coven leadership are Lay-Ministers. Lay-Ministry allows for a lessening of accountability to the coven and is the more effective position for those without the time to dedicate to intense Theological discourse, crisis intervention and everything else the coven might require of them.

Elected Clergy are the leaders of covens over 8 people in number that have been elected by a one person one vote election in their respective coven. Elected Clergy may be of any circle within the UEW tradition, but are required to take the Oath of Practice Each group may have 2 elected clergypersons. Groups over 13 in number may add one more for every 10 members, if they see fit (3 at 14-23, 4 at 24-33, 5 at 34-43, etc).

Elected Clergy must be 21 years of age or older, although an elected clergyperson can become a **provisional** or **acting** priest of a coven provided s/he is assisted by a Lay-minister or ordained priest of 21 years or older and is 18 years of age or older. Elected Clergy, or priest/esse/s, are elected to serve a term of no more than 366 days, this election may be done in a manner so decided by the coven body, provided all coven members have one vote. Those elected clergy whose secular training in therapy, law or mediation give them special talent in hashing out a handfasting contract may do so, but those without such experience may not.

Ordained Priest(esse)s have gone a step beyond election. Ordination varies from State to State, and place to place and it is the ordained Priest(esse)s whom the state recognizes as Religious Leaders. While many states have ordination procedures that the candidate will have to follow, The Church of Universal Eclectic Wicca has guidelines which must be met before we allow someone to become ordained. I will be frank with you, these ordination Procedures were not in place when I first became a Priestess, if they had been, I would not have been ordained. I am pleased to say, however, that I have since gone through each and every one of these requirements.

Ordination Procedures of The Church of Universal Eclectic Wicca

"Candidates for Ordination must be Third Circle Members who've been elected to two terms as coven leader. One of these terms may've been as a Second Circle Lay-Minister. The Candidate must've studied for at least one year each in any two of the main paths of The Third Circle, either under an Ordained Priest(ess) or under a Third circle member of that path. The Candidate must be sponsored for Ordination by an Ordained Priest(ess), this Priest(ess) will serve as the Candidate's Advisor throughout the proceedings. In addition to these ecclesiastical requirements, the candidate for ordination must be a High School Graduate

with a true diploma, GED graduates are taken on a case by case basis and even then, very rarely. The candidate must demonstrate an in depth knowledge of Wicca, Universal Eclectic Wicca and Comparative Theology by discourse before a council consisting of a pre-first circle student, graduates of the First, Second and Third Circle and an Ordained Priest. In addition, the candidate for ordination must've completed at least 18 hours of college-level course work in Human Services, the Social Sciences and/or Comparative theology, in order to count toward ordination, this course work will not be counted if the final and/or cumulative grade was less than B (3.0). Before The Church of Universal Eclectic Wicca will recognize a Priest(ess) as "ordained" (s)he must complete several tasks requested by the ordained Priest(ess) advising him/her. These tasks must be designed to help point out and correct a fault or weakness in the candidate's style of Leadership." ³³

As you can see, ordination is not for everyone, and by no means should anyone ever feel "Pushed" in that direction. As always, whatever works for you is the best thing for you to do.

In the Third Circle, much of your study is self-directed, and those who like to have tasks, hard or simple, set out before them in neat little rows are warned out of the Third Circle. I admit, however, that I have seen a few Scribes who were more "secretary to this or that priest" than "Scribe." One assumes that such arrangement is by choice.

You may've noticed we speak more of "covens" in the Third Circle, this is because we believe that advanced work in Wicca requires an expanding circle, people to bounce your ideas off. It may take years before you find even two people who you wish in your coven, but a coven of three is better than solitude at this level, so a coven of three it is.

A coven in Universal Eclectic Wicca isn't always a group of people gathering to do their rituals together. A UEW's definition of coven also includes bands of solitaires gathering together for discussion and decision-making,

and one should by no means feel that they need to give up anything to join a coven. If it isn't a mostly positive experience (every coven DOES have "off" days,) then leave. Likewise, don't make the mistake of "holding together" a coven that has no "chemistry," it only leads to anger on the part of the ill-suited coven and the ill-suited priest(ess.) Unfortunately, I speak from experience.

Chapter Thirteen

Personal Remembrances.

Well, there it is, all of Universal Eclectic Wicca in its entirety, with some omissions of course, (I could spend a whole chapter on “septs” the traditions within the tradition, but I think you’ve had enough of me by now!) and some nice little additions courtesy of Tamryn Wyrmsstar, who has decided to use his old craft name to preserve his identity and Jonah Windsinger, who also declines to speak openly. You may be wondering how, or why even, the task of writing this work came to me, I mean, I’ve been a priestess since 1992 or so, and my initial priestesship was held in dispute by my coven for quite a while. I was a relative newcomer to Wicca, although I feel my mom raised me more Wiccan than she knew, and the coven had a hard time with my “sailing” into the Third Circle.

I’ve always been a tad mentally hyperactive, I get one thing in my mind and I block everything else out. I breathed UEW in when I encountered it. It said, I discovered, everything I’d been saying for years. I won’t deny that my personal introduction to Wicca was less than spectacular. The first book anyone gave me on Wicca was *The Spiral Dance*, and I knew that the traditions and practices just weren’t written for the earthy Yankees of the snowbound northeast. Thankfully, I had a very cool Dianic Priestess go, “well, maybe this isn’t the right way for you.” She introduced me to a woman from my

area who I'd met in passing about a million times. This woman, a Priestess, was creating a tradition after leaving the Gardnerian-based group she'd been with since the sixties, and she'd gathered up a micro-coven of dissenters who immediately loved me to death. I remember sneaking out to go to rituals, even though, in retrospect, my mother probably would've let me go, and running to my teacher's house after high school so that I could have a lesson, then be driven home in time to pass the bus and get in before mom called to check on me from work.

I've had some of the best discoveries of my life since then, like finding out that the girl in High School that I wanted to tell so badly that I was a Wiccan, and training to be a priestess, was the daughter of a Wiccan Priest and wouldn't have laughed at me at all. Or discovering that a Priestess named "Stardancer" was actually a friend from High School and that my leaving a copy of a book on Wicca at her house was what started her.

I went to Boston and discovered a coven with the same name, trad and difficulties as ours, and again and again found myself swept away in this beautiful group of people.

I left Wicca for a few years because the Coven I'd trained in had disbanded with our priestess' move to California, and I faced personal crisis after crisis, finally turning back to Wicca after the birth of my son. When I came back, I thought at first that the changes I noticed were in "everybody else," but slowly, I realized that I was noticing what people had blocked out for me, or that I had managed to block out for myself, that Wiccans had a dark side, and that it infused everything with those same superficial attitudes I hated in High School. Covens were popularity and manipulation organizations for the most part, but even with a shelf full of Buckland, Cunningham, et al, I didn't feel right with solitary Wicca.

I achieved the Third Degree of the tradition that would become UEW in a ceremony with a priestess who was in town, and a few weeks later was offered the position of Priestess, I declined because I couldn't stand what I was seeing in Wicca and had begun to look elsewhere.

Somehow, I ended up being in a coven who's leader seemed better than all of the others I'd met, and it took that same woman who brought me to Wicca saying, "why do you follow him if he treats you like crap?" for me to realize that I was really suffering in this coven, and steadily beginning to treat myself as badly as I was being treated. I realized then that there was a major generation gap in Wicca at the time, the "old" Wiccans, who resist change, and the "new" Wiccans who are the children of the sixties and knew nothing but change. I got out.

I formed a horrible coven. I was messed up, my coveners were messed up and we left hating each other. It happens. I grew from it, returned to my first priestess and "took the step," becoming UEW's youngest priestess. From my new position, I launched "Religion: Other, the Central New York Pagan Alliance." I was told I was corrupt, power hungry and "had no right" gathering people together, but the solitaires spoke. "Thank You for our voice back," they said, and when a man claiming to be Wiccan seduced his 16 year old members it was Religion: Other that called the Police, Religion:Other who shut him down and Religion:Other who warned the world.

That was my first trial by fire. I went to bed every night for two weeks with tears in my eyes because if RO had been more "out there" it wouldn't have happened. Not long after, a metaphysical bookstore gave us a list of people, who we called and sent information packets to. For legal reasons, we've always listed the person, organization, etc. that refers people to Religion:Other, but the store took offense at us using their name on the form letter. Until the day we left the area, the store, which also sponsors very pricey courses in Wicca, refused to keep our signs on their "public" bulletin board. The fight with them, which left me nauseous with anger at their blatant lack of respect for their own community, was the second trial by fire, but RO went on.

It got nasty, I'm sorry to say, and for a while I was the victim of a nasty whisper campaign I later discovered to be the work of the same person who RO had ousted. Most of the whispers were ignored by everyone, but I was confronted on a few of them. Yes, when I was in High School I tried Satanism, no, I am not a Satanist, no, I never performed any kind of

sacrifice, and neither did any of the Satanists I hung out with. It was a group of kids getting wasted and talking backwards, it lasted two weeks in summer,

I was there for two days of it and left because I had no interest either in drugs or the "group's" leader. I thought that those rumors and the need to defend my past was a trial by fire, but it wasn't.

My last trial by fire came when the Coven I had been in announced that five of the original members, including my priestess and two close friends, were HIV positive, as was a good chunk of the coven they had come from, where unprotected sex Magick (in the seventies and eighties) was a common occurrence. When I wrote the first draft of this work, we'd already lost one person, and the others had "withdrawn" from their friends with the idea that this somehow made it easier on us. Of the original five members, only one has lived to see UEW in its current incarnation. By the Will of the Gods, I've tested negatively repeatedly, probably because I became of age into an AIDS aware Wicca, and to this day the guilt I sometimes feel of "being spared" burns inside far worse than any other pain I've faced.

Perhaps wrongly, I feel I was spared in part to carry on the legacy, I was always the kid of our coven, the dreamer. My priestess, who has since passed on, cried when I read her the rough draft of All One Wicca because it represents her dreams and mine, mingled into reality. Since the time this work was first conceived, Wicca has taken on a new and strange life. I find myself accused of being a dinosaur, of being the old guard, in the face of new and bright youngsters with a host of resources I could not have imagined when my journey began, youngsters who could not imagine the Wicca of the generation before them. My liberal and passionate views on Wicca which caused my elders such strife are now seen as stodgy and conservative by new, young Wiccans who are challenging all we held as true.

The idea of Unity, of peace and friendship between all Wiccans and others of faith may be a dream right now. Divisiveness is rampant, and it may be years, or even decades, before we fully realize the dream of those many elders who went before. Won't you join us in the dream?

Footnotes to Book One

Footnotes.

1. tra+di+tion (trà-d | shòàn) n. 1. The passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation, especially by oral communication. 2.a. A mode of thought or behavior followed by a people continuously from generation to generation; a custom or usage. b. A set of such customs and usages viewed as a coherent body of precedents influencing the present. 3. A body of unwritten religious precepts. 4. A time-honored practice or set of such practices. 5. Law. Transfer of property to another. The American Heritage Dictionary
2. The word "faith" is used here as opposed to Religion. A Faith is a non-specific religion or religious Philosophy, like Christianity. Religions within the Christian Faith include Catholicism, Fundamentalism, Protestantism, Vineyard Christianity and more.
3. This is not to say that ALL fundamentalists share these same issues. This was in reaction to one church that referred to itself as "Fundamentalist."
4. Gerald Gardner *Witchcraft Today* Chapter Four: "Witch practices." Reprinted by Magickal Childe Printing.
5. Crowley: This is worth a good belly laugh, but when one realizes that this kind of thing, spoken without any objection, is taken for the Truth, it becomes hard to even smile.

6. UEW Third Circle Elder Tamryn on the meaning of the word Universal, New York, 1990
7. Much of this is better described in Chapter Two of *The Psychology of Religious Experiences*, Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough, Basic Books, inc. 1965
8. The Church of All Worlds is described in detail in chapter 10 of *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, & Other Pagans in America Today* Margot Adler, Beacon Press, 1979/1986
9. The Newsletter of CUEW/Coven of The Far Flung Net. Formerly the newsletter of "Religion: Other"
10. A certain fundamentalist Christian Author describes visualization as an indoctrination or "cult mind-control," and while I think that's a load of bull, by all means stop visualizing at once if you feel controlled or somehow indoctrinated, or even slightly uncomfortable, for that matter. No reasonable Wiccan would demand you to visualize a certain way, not even me. Do As you Will...
11. This is not to indicate in anyway that one shouldn't build a Wiccan Church. In fact, a stable worship environment is always healthy
12. "Let none..." "Let none." From the Erecting the Temple ceremony in *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*, Raymond Buckland, Llewellyn, 1975,1977,1987. These are very standard ritual components, but Buckland's ritual is such a prime example of the art of simplicity that any study of these rituals seems bland without it.
13. "enacted meditation..." from Chapter four: "Creating Sacred Space" of *Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, Starhawk, Harper & Row, 1979.
14. "Length of a man's arm..." The Bell Tower Book of Shadows. Bell Coven of Universal Eclectic Wicca, Maine.

15. "Occasionally, this is "the circle, now open can never be broken."
- 16 This is in no means an expression of Heterosexuality as better or even right. As one Half of a woman/woman relationship, I am very aware of the inability my lover and I have to replicate. At the same time, I often acknowledge her masculine aspects, just like I often acknowledge my own. Being half male and half female is the lot of all of us, chromosomes be damned.
17. "Persephone's decent" from *The Second Black Water Coven Book of Shadows and Light*, 1994. Much of the information used is from *The Delphian Text*, Parts Thirteen and Fourteen, Copyright 1929, The Delphian Society. It should be noted that this is a **very** modern retelling of the tale, and should not be confused with an ancient telling of the myth.
18. *The Delphian Text*, Copyright 1929, The Delphian Society, Chicago, Ill.
19. The Maiden, Mother and Crone as Artemis, Selene and Hecate is from several feminist traditions, although my source was *Motherwit: A Guide to Healing & Psychic Development*, Diane Mariechild, 1981, The Crossing Press, Trumansburg, NY.
- 20 *The Charter of Religion: Other, An Alliance of Alternative Religion*, now defunct. Formerly *Religion: Other* The New York Pagan Alliance, Syracuse, NY.
- 21 The Celestial Equator or "equinoctial" is the circular midpoint of the Celestial Sphere, an imaginary sphere surrounding the Earth upon which ancient astronomers thought the stars were "Placed." Because of the Earth's rotation, the Celestial Sphere appears to rotate once every sidereal day. A sidereal day is the time it takes for the Celestial sphere to completely rotate and averages about 3 minutes, 56 seconds less than the solar day, which takes into account the movement of the sun in relation to the Celestial Sphere.

- 22 Buying a real tree that's been cut down is sacred to us, it symbolizes the dead God, and it means that, on average in our area, two trees will be planted in its place, and that much more oxygen will be available to breathe. When we're done with it, it gets mulched, as do most in our city.
23. Contrary to the hate literature of some pseudo-Christian churches and the near yearly news article produced from that literature, there is no proof of there EVER having been a Celtic god called "Samhain," although several bands, pets and a comic book character HAVE had that name.
24. Like many other religions, a different view of life has lead us to the conclusion that our Gods have matured and don't require human sacrifices anymore, or even appreciate them. Living a good life, and then dying naturally is sacrifice enough for me!
25. Letter to Congressmen, Phoenix and Kaatryn MacMorgan
26. I don't know about your house, but mine houses a rabbit, a cat, two people with careers, a library, assorted guests and a male child, it is often a disaster area. If it wasn't clean enough, some of my students felt I was less than professional. One priestess, in her book on running a coven, suggests that students who find their teacher's house to be less than neat and tidy should look for another teacher because it is a sign of laziness. My own priestess, wiser woman by far, calls clutter nothing less than "signs of life"
27. Gardner, *Witchcraft Today*. Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, & Other Pagans in America Today*.
28. From "If I could wake" from The Second Black Water Coven Book of Shadows and Light, 1994.
29. It does work together! Balancing ITS and Crowley," Kat MacMorgan and Jonah Emedred Windsinger, Black Water Arts, 1995

30. "Come away, for I prepare for you. Move, therefore, and show yourselves, open up the mysteries of your creation, be friendly unto me, for I am the servant of the same God as you, the true worshipper of the highest." Actually, it was written in Theban Script, but at that time, I was part of a small group of seekers who believed, as I do now, that words have the power to bind you, and that a phrase on a piece of Jewelry can keep you on track when you wear it. In retrospect, I think the thing was very tacky, actually.
31. And is most assuredly not the name of practioners of an "Ancient Irish Religion"
32. Wets: In the central New York area, a plate of french fries floating in beef, turkey or mushroom gravy. Coney: A "white" hot dog, spicier than a regular one and made with veal, nonfat dry milk and other things undesirable in normal human consumption.
33. <http://www.cuew.org>

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Book Two:

The Grimoire

One of the tools of ancient sorcery and Witchcraft was the grimoire. More than a book of "spells," the grimoire was an instruction manual, telling the Witch or Sorcerer many of the "secrets" of the universe. I've gathered together thirteen secrets from a number of grimoires and Books of Shadows, both modern and ancient, for the use of the solitary and coven Wiccan with no grimoire of his/her own. The information here is not wholly Wiccan, and what is Wiccan is not wholly Universal Eclectic Wiccan, but anyone with an interest in old ways may find much of what lies within useful. My suggestion is that one use this as a starter grimoire, building their own from this point forward. I'm a bit of an old mule in my separation of the Grimoire and the Book of Light, I know that many gather it all into one great tome, with all their little bits of knowledge interspersed with prayers and rituals, but I like to keep them only partially together, if at all. The first three ring binder I bought spared me endless rewrites in blank books, and since then I've never kept a tome in anything else. I can't give enough praise for expandable tomes, so if you desire to separate your Sacred Book into Grimoire, Journal and Book of Light, consider that each side will grow at a different rate and leave space accordingly. As a Teacher, one of my strongest problems is my handwriting; my students will twist and turn their head trying to figure out the peculiar backslant that my notes and journals are inscribed in. As a result, I have since turned to a computer and printer instead of a blank book and a pen for those works I share with others. My feelings are mixed, on one hand, a floppy Grimoire just doesn't seem to "feel" very Pagan, but on the other, my students look over my notes and understand them. I've decided that it is I, not the computer, who is doing the writing, and that it is more important to be legible than traditional. Much of what I studied in writing *All One Wicca* were personal journals, so I realize that with the changing of technology my disks will become obsolete.

As a result, I print everything out in duplicate. Hopefully, if Wicca becomes suppressed, these printouts will not read like some of the "translations" of the great metaphysicists of the past, with the word "Illegible" in the middle of a spell or worse, the translator's best guess.

Contents of this Grimoire:

- 1:Altars and Altar Cloths
- 2:Basic Herbalism
- 3:Candles
- 4:Corn Dollies
- 5:Crystals and Minerals
- 6: Divination and the last of the True Scientists
- 7:Five Common ways of Raising Power
- 8:Gods and Goddesses
- 9:Holiday and Lunar recipes
- 10: Incense
- 11: Magickal/Craft names
- 12:Dedications and Initiations
- 13: Operative and Ritual Witchcraft

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Altars and Altar Cloths

"An Altar should be made from wood, no metal, excepting those Altars with compartments in which to hide the Blessed Book, which may contain metal if the metal is needed for the hidden space."-A Fam-trad

"We crafted our Altar from an old tree stump and by the second year it had been sprinkled so often that the wood had somehow sprouted a new tree." "...S suggested a mirrored Altar for the moonlight rituals...this felt to us like it doubled the full moon that night."-Wolf Moon Coven

The Altar (not to be confused with alter) is the sacred space upon which tools are kept. Two main forms of Altars exist, round or pentagonal altars that stand in the middle of the circle or rectangular ones placed against walls or the far east of the circle. Both are fairly simple to make, although a pentagonal altar requires more work. Decorator tables are good, cheap altars, but can't hold much weight. Chief among the "bonuses" of decorator tables is the fact that they either fold up or have removable legs for storage and transport. Some decorator tables are all wood instead of wood and metal, fulfilling the requirements of some trads.

To make a round altar simply, take a wooden crate and glue a round piece of plywood to it, or attach three, four or five equal length "legs" to a single piece. One modern Book of Shadows suggests five decorative posts, cut at slight angles, glued with silicone to a plate glass mirror. If you have a root worker who twists willow roots into stands and chairs, *that* would make a sturdier stand for a mirrored altar. Mirrored altars are fairly new, although The Sacred book of one Fam-trad has a reference to a two hundred year old one. As a practical matter, mirrored

altars double your light, but they also scratch, break, and weigh a lot. They are wonderful stationary altars outside or in, but lousy if you plan to move a lot.

A "T" altar is easy to make, simply glue three pieces of equal sized plywood together, in a sort of double-legged T shape. For strength, add a fourth piece so the altar resembles an H with a line across the top. These tend to tip when built too narrowly, so be careful.

Altar Cloths are circular or square and hang about half way to the floor. Usually an altar cloth is white, although many lunar rituals use black or deep blue altar cloths.

The Night Sky cloth, or Universe cloth, is studded with small stars that are either "nailheads," sequins or needlework and is sometimes used in fancier rituals. If you are going to use an untreated cloth, make sure it's cotton, because cotton doesn't tend to burn quickly. To be safe, either put a piece of glass (round table glasses are available at many department stores at reasonable prices) on top of the altar or spritz the altar with water before the ritual. An altar glass is a wonderful thing if you wish to use your cloth more than once, since wax is very difficult to remove from many materials.

To remove wax from a cotton cloth, freeze the cloth, and snap off the frozen wax that can be removed in that manner. If only a small wax stain is left, you can remove it by machine-washing it alone in hot water, then tumble drying on high with a dry old towel. If a large stain remains, weight the cotton cloth by tying it around a rock and then boil it in a large pan of water. Allow the water to cool, and then place the pan in a refrigerator or freezer. The wax should form hard lumps on the top of the surface of the water. If that STILL does not work, iron the stain between two old towels, wetting the top towel or using high steam. If all else fails, many dry cleaners can remove wax chemically.

An altar glass is not optional if you intend to use velvet! Velvet burns fairly easily, reacts poorly to salt water and is nearly destroyed by better waxes (Like beeswax.) The altar glass, backed by black velvet, is used for scrying by the more Magickal trads, and, while not as effective as a mirror, does improve the amount of light your candles

give. It is not a staggering investment, and if you can keep it in one piece it saves money in the long run. Make sure to stick felt to the bottoms of very hard (like iron) candleholders before keeping them on the altar, and if your athamé is to rest unsheathed place a small square of cloth, like a fabric napkin, beneath it.

Altar cloths are rarely colored if the candles are. I've seen a few rituals where the candles and cloth matched or were complimentary colors, but most use a colored cloth with white candles or colored candles with a white cloth. The Altar cloth color is considered the same in meaning to a candle color, so use the chart for candles for cloth colors.

Basic Herbalism

Herbalism tidbits are found in many Books of Shadows, and many books on Wicca, but the best herbalism books are often non-Wiccan in nature. For more information on herbs, look in the Food, Cookbook, or Alternative Medicine sections of your bookstore or library. The following is a very partial compendium of herbs, listing some of their uses, some of the Gods to whom these herbs are considered sacred and the Zodiac signs they are attributed to.

It should be noted that Herbalism, in and of itself, is not Wiccan. It is an unrelated science, a study of plants and their compounds. Historically and in our shared metaphoric history, the study of herbs was a dark and mysterious path of learning, with several discounted theories, like the Doctrine of Signatures, which taught that the Judeo-Christian god marked each herb with its use (thus a heart shaped herb would help the heart, a fire colored flower heal a burn), or the belief that a herb of one Zodiac sign was used to treat a disease of another. Such things are very interesting to read, the works of Culpepper and Boehme provide me great amusement on occasion, but they aren't modern science, and are no replacement for a good modern book of herbs that describes the chemical compounds of herbs and what they do. Often, this purified chemical compound, not the herb with its allergens and additional compounds, is the better treatment.

ACACIA (Acacia Senegal)

Also known as: Arabic, Cape Gum, Christ's Crown, Egyptian Thorn, Gum Arabic Tree, Thorny Acacia.

Indigenous to: Northern Africa

Sacred to: Diana, Ishtar, Osiris, Ra. Burned on Hindu and Buddhist sacred fires. In Judeo-Christian Mythology, Acacia was the wood of the Ark of The Covenant and The Sacred Tabernacle, and Thorny Acacia was the plant from which Christ's Crown of Thorns was made.

Common uses: Powdered, dried acacia gum is added to hot water to form a throat coating mucilage that also prevents diarrhea.

Zodiac correspondence: Mars, Scorpio.

ADDER'S TONGUE (*Erythronium Americanum*)

Also known as: Dog-Tooth Violet, Rattlesnake Violet, Snakeleaf, Yellow Snowdrop.

Indigenous to: North America

Sacred to: Hecate, Diana, Luna, Persephone

Common uses: Skin conditions

Zodiac correspondence: Moon, Cancer

AGAVE (*Agave Americana*)

Also known as: American Agave, Century

Indigenous to: Hot, Arid, North and South America

Sacred to: Mayael. Considered the Mexican sacred "Tree of Life and Abundance"

Common uses: Decoction of sap used for tonics and laxatives

Zodiac correspondence: Mars, Venus

ALDER (*Alnus Glutinosa*)

Also known as: Black Alder, European Alder, Owler

Indigenous to: Europe, Asia, North Africa

(*Alnus Rubra*)

Also known as: Red Alder, Oregon Alder

Indigenous to: Northern California, North to Alaska

(*Alnus Serrulata*)

Also known as: Smooth Alder, Hazel Alder

Indigenous to: Nova Scotia south to Virginia, The Great Lakes, Louisiana and Florida

Sacred to: Astarte, Bran, A sacred tree of the Druids.

Common uses: Used dried and powdered or infusions for astringent purposes, also a sore throat gargle.

ALLSPICE (*pimenta officinalis*)

Also known as: Clove pepper

Indigenous to: South and Central America, Islands of Central America

Sacred to: Uranus

Common uses of: As a spice, a warming tea or for gas.

Zodiac correspondence: Uranus

ALMOND (*prunus amygdalus*)

Also known as: Greek Nuts, Maiden's tears.

Indigenous to: Mediterranean

Sacred to: Kerriwen, Jupiter, Thoth, Psyche, Demeter. Myth: Phyllis, a Thracian princess left at the altar was turned into an almond tree by the gods, her tears became the inner "nut" of the tree.

Common use: High protein food, used in non-dairy "milks"

ALOE (*aloe vera*)

Also known as: Barbados Aloe, Curacao Aloe.

Indigenous to: Most Tropical Islands

Sacred to: Hecate, Mars, Zeus

Common uses of: All purpose gel within leaves used as a base for other external remedies, good for burns, bug bites, scar prevention. A natural absorbable and water-soluble lubricant as well.

Zodiac correspondence: Mars, Venus

ALTHEA (*althea officinalis*)

Also known as: Marshmallow, Witchwet, Wymote.

Indigenous to: Wetlands

Sacred to: In the Arthurian Mythos, althea grows in the sacred pools of the various mystical women who appear within them, it is used as a base of "charms" a substance to hide potions within.

Common uses of: Food plant with alternate usages much like aloe vera.

Zodiac correspondence: Moon

AMERANTH/AMERANTHUS (*ameranthus hypochondriacus*)

Also known as: Lady Bleeding, Cockscomb, Prince's Feather.

Indigenous to: Central United States, cultivated in Europe

Sacred to: Artemis, Aphrodite, Diana, Venus.

Common uses of: Astringent, "broken heart charms."

Zodiac correspondence: Saturn

ANGELICA (*angelica archangelica*)

Also known as: European Angelica, Garden Angelica, Witchbane, Witchware.

Indigenous to: Damp areas, Europe, Asia

(*Angelica Sylvestris*) **Also known as:** Angelweed, Goutweed, Wild Angelica.

Indigenous to: varies

(*Angelica Atropupurea*)

Also known as: American Angelica, Angolan, Purple (or violet) Angelica, Purple (or Violet) Angel.

Indigenous to: North America

Sacred to: Angels, supposedly a monk was given a recipe that warded off the plague by an angel. The weed used was angelica. It was believed no Witch could stand the sight of angelica, and thus it was put in herbal brews by Cunningfolk to "prove" their faith.

Common uses: High doses may be harmful, and at least two poisonous plants resemble angelica, so avoid using it unless you are very sure about what you have.

Zodiac correspondence: Sun, Leo

ANISE (*Pimpinella Anisium*)

Also known as: False Licorice Seed, Italian Licorice.

Indigenous to: widely

Sacred to: Apollo, Mercury, Osiris

Common uses: Flavoring, cramp and nausea reliever

Zodiac correspondence: Moon, Aquarius

APPLE (*Pyrus Malus*)

Also known as: Apple, various varieties.

Indigenous to: Europe, North America

Sacred to: Aphrodite, Athena, Diana, Druids, Dionysus, Eris, Hera.

Myths: "Adam and

Eve," "The Apple of Discord," "Hercules and the Golden Apples of the Hesperides," numerous Faerie tales, including "Snow White"

Common uses: Food, mild laxative, healing and love charms

ARNICA (*Arnica Montna*)

Also known as: Mountain Tobacco, Silver Witchweed, Silverwolf, Wolfsbane

Indigenous to: Canada, US, Europe

Sacred to: Hecate

Common uses: DO NOT USE unless you are an herbal doctor, but plant in a decorative garden for protection. Use gloves when tending it.

Zodiac correspondence: Zodiac, Capricorn

BALM (*Melissa Officinalis*)

Also known as: Lemon Balm, Sweet Melissa

Indigenous to: Varies

Sacred to: Hecate, Juno, Pan

Common uses: Food, external poltice for irritations, mosquito repellent, aromatherapy, cramps.

Zodiac correspondence: Jupiter, Cancer

BARLEY (*Hordeum Vulgare*)

Indigenous to: Europe, North Africa

Sacred to: Odin, Demeter and “grain” gods.

Common uses: Food, anti-itch.

Zodiac correspondence: Saturn, Leo

BELLADONNA (*Atropa Belladonna*)

Also known as: Deadly Nightshade, Dwale, Poison Black Cherry.

Indigenous to: US, Europe

Sacred to: Bellona, Hecate, Hypnos, Morpheus, Somnus

Common uses: Do Not Use...Poisonous in small quantities.

Zodiac correspondence: Saturn, Capricorn

CALENDULA (*Calendula Officinalis*)

Also known as: Garden Marigold

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Persephone and other “maiden” goddesses

Common uses: Cramp, gas and nausea relief

Zodiac correspondence: Sun, Leo

CAMOMILE or CHAMOMILE (*Anthemis Nobilis*)

Also known as: Roman Chamomile, Garden Chamomile.

Indigenous to: Europe

(*Matricaria Chamomilla*)

Also known as: German Chamomile, Wild Chamomile, Witchdaisy.

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Apollo, Ares, Hera, Zeus

Common uses of: Calming, Muscle relaxant, appetite stimulator.

Zodiac correspondence: Sun, Leo

CATNIP (*Nepeta Cataria* or *Nepeta Nepeta*)

Also known as: Bast's Tea, Catmint, Catwort, Field Balm.

Indigenous to: All over

Sacred to: Bast, Freya

Common uses of: Similar to Chamomile, also good for upper respiratory and sinus infections.

Zodiac correspondence: Venus

CATMINT (*Nepeta Musseli*)

Also known as: Purple or flowering Catnip.

Indigenous to: Dry areas where catnip is grown.

Sacred to: Bast, Freya

Common uses of: This ground-climbing sister of Catnip, with its purple flowers, can be used like catnip, but is not quite as good.

Zodiac correspondence: Venus

CLUBMOSS (*Lycopodium Clavatum*)

Also known as: Foxtail, Staghorn, Wolfclaw.

Indigenous to: Varies

Common uses: Powdered dried clubmoss is used on wet rashes and nosebleeds. Use commercial preparations, as it can be poisonous

Zodiac correspondence: Moon

CURRENT (*Ribes Nigrum*)

Also known as: Black Currant

Indigenous to: Marshes

Common use: Diuretic

(*Ribes Rubrum*)

Also known as: Red Currant, Wineberry.

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: All wine and fruit gods.

Common uses: Wine flavoring, upset stomach. juice has cooling properties

Zodiac correspondence: Jupiter

DANDELION (*Taraxacum Officinale*)

Also known as: Blowball, Lion's Tooth, Wild Endive

Indigenous to: EVERYWHERE

Sacred to: Eris, Hecate, Persephone

Common uses: Petals, leaves and root edible, a natural diuretic and stimulant, the ground roasted root of which makes a good "coffee" with a caffeine free "kick"

Zodiac correspondence: Sun, Leo

ELDER (*Sambucus canadensis*)

Also known as: American Elder, Black Elder, Sweet Elder

Indigenous to: North America **WARNING:** Poisonous when raw!!!!

(*Sambucus Nigra*)

Also known as: Black Elder, Ellhorn

Indigenous to: Europe **WARNING:** Extremely purgative when raw, nausea and vomiting may occur.

(*Sambucus racemosa*)

Also known as: Red Elder

Indigenous to: Europe, Canada. **WARNING:** The seeds within the berries are poisonous.

(*Sambucus ebulus*)

Also known as: Dwarf Elder, Wild Elder

Indigenous to: US, Europe **WARNING:** The berries are poisonous

Sacred to: Dionysus, Venus.

Common uses: Varies, use commercial preparations.

Zodiac correspondence: Venus

ELECAMPANE (*Inula helenium*)

Also known as: elfdock, elfwort, horseheal, scabwort.

Indigenous to: US

Sacred to: Helene

Common uses: Cramps, itches, bugbites.

Zodiac correspondence: Mercury, Uranus

EUROPEAN CENTAURY (*Centaureum umbellatum* or *Erythraea Centaurium*)

Also known as: Bitter Herb, Centaur Herb, Centaury.

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Centaurs, Epona, Pan.

Common uses: Dieting, blemishes.

Zodiac correspondence: Sun

EUROPEAN VERVAIN (*Verbena Officinalis*)

Also known as: Enchanter's Plant, Juno's Tears, Vervain, White Verbena, White Vervain.

Indigenous to: Mediterranean

Sacred to: Bast, Cerridwen, Demeter, Diana, Hermes, Isis, Juno, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Persephone, Thor, and Venus

Common uses of: Improves kidney and bladder function. Said to be an "aphrodisiac"

Zodiac correspondence: Gemini, Taurus, Venus

FENNEL (*Foeniculum vulgare*)

Also known as: Sweet fennel

Indigenous to: Mediterranean, Asia

Sacred to: Adonis

Common uses: Stomach problems, expectorant.

Zodiac correspondence: Mercury, Virgo

FENUGREEK (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*)

Sacred to: Aphrodite, Apollo, Pan, Venus

Common uses: Believed to be an aphrodisiac. A natural “pick up” plant, good for the “icky” feeling of the last day of a cold.

Zodiac correspondence: Mercury

FOXGLOVE (*Digitalis Purpurea*)

Also known as: Digitalis

Indigenous to: US, Europe

Sacred to: Aphrodite, Persephone, Pluto, Venus

Common uses: The heart medicine Digitalis is made from Foxglove. If anyone ever tells you herbal remedies are a load of bull, remind them of good ol’ Foxglove. However, it causes Contact Dermatitis, among other things, so don’t go harvesting. If you have a heart condition, take a prescription remedy, not a homemade one.

Zodiac correspondence: Pluto, Venus

FRAGRANT VALERIAN (*Valeriana Officinalis*)

Also known as: All-Heal, Heliotrope Valerian.

Indigenous to: Europe, East Coast US

Sacred to: Apollo, Cernunnos, Ra, Zeus.

Common uses: Migraine, Insomnia. Warning: extended use or large doses may cause symptoms of poisoning. I know of a person who lost a kitten to Valerian Poisoning, so if you plant it be careful!!!!

Zodiac correspondence: Mercury

GINGER (*Zingiber Officinale*)

Also known as: African Ginger

Indigenous to: Tropical parts of Asia, cultivated elsewhere

Sacred to: Ginger is a sacred plant in it's own right.

Common uses: Ginger eliminates motionsickness AND Morning sickness. Try a pinch of gingerroot powder on the back on the tongue, ginger beer or "Hot" ginger ale, or candied (crystallized) ginger. Ginger also helps clear sinuses and relieves migraine, but some people find high doses make them feel shaky.

Zodiac correspondence: Moon

GINSENG (*Panax schin-seng*)

Also known as: Chinese Ginseng

Indigenous to: Asia

(*Panax quinquefolius*)

Also known as: American Ginseng, Five-Leafed Ginseng

Indigenous to: North America

Sacred to: Ginseng is said to be sacred of it's own right

Common uses: This is the "Wonder Plant" it seems to work for everything, especially as a "pick up." It seems to cause headaches in some people, however.

Zodiac correspondence: Scorpio, Uranus

HEATHER (*Calluna Vulgarius*)

Also known as: Ling

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Erin, Isis, Persephone, Venus

Common uses: Aromatherapy, Diuretic, stomach troubles

Zodiac correspondence: Venus

HOREHOUND (*Murrubium Vulgar*)

Also known as: Marrubium

Indigenous to: Varies

Sacred to: Horus

Common uses: Common Cold, especially when candied.

Zodiac correspondence: Mercury

HOUSELEEK (*Sempervivum Tectorium*)

Also known as: Aaron's Rod, Hens and Chicks, Jupiter's Beard.

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Jupiter, Thor

Common uses: Leaves used much as Aloe is.

Zodiac correspondence: Jupiter

JASMINE (*Jasminum Officinale*)

Indigenous to: Warm parts of Eastern Hemisphere

Sacred to: Diana and other lunar/night goddesses.

Common uses: Aromatherapy, used for Migraine and an "aphrodisiac"

Zodiac correspondence: Cancer, Jupiter, Moon

LADY'S MANTLE (*Alchemillia Vulgaris*)

Sacred to: Earth Goddesses and the Virgin Mary, Angels.

Common uses: Reducing bleeding, appetite stimulator.

Zodiac Correspondence: Venus

LAUREL (*Lauros Nobilis*)

Also known as: Bay Laurel

Indigenous to: Mediterranean

Sacred to: Adonis, Apollo, Artemis, Gaea, Helios, Mars, Zeus.

Common uses: Spice

Zodiac correspondence: Sun, Leo

MANDRAKE (*Mandragora Officinarum*)

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Aphrodite, Diana, Hecate, Nimue, Saturn

Common uses: Poisonous

Zodiac correspondence: Mercury

MEADOWSWEET (*Filipendula ulmaria*)

Also known as: Meadowqueen

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Demeter

Common uses: A natural aspirin.

Zodiac correspondence: Gemini, Mercury, Venus

MEXICAN DAMIANA (*Turnera Aphrodiaca*)

Indigenous to: Southern North America

Sacred to: Venus

Common uses: Stimulant

Zodiac correspondence: Pluto

MILKWEED (*Asclepias Syriacae*)

Also known as: Silkweed

Indigenous to: North America

Sacred to: Juno

Common uses: Kidney Stones
Zodiac correspondence: Jupiter

MUGWORT (*Artemisia Vulgaris*)
Also known as: Sailor's Tobacco
Indigenous to: Everywhere
Sacred to: Artemis, Diana.
Common uses: Anti-itch. Large doses cause sickness.
Zodiac correspondence: Moon, Venus

NUTMEG (*Myrsia Fragrance*)
Indigenous to: Indonesia
Sacred to: Jupiter, Uranus
Common uses: Anti-gas, a hallucinogen which can kill in a dose as small as two nutmegs.
Zodiac correspondence: Jupiter

ORRIS ROOT (*Iris Florintina*)
Also known as: Florentine Iris
Indigenous To: Mediterranean
Sacred to: Aphrodite, Hera, Iris, Isis, Osiris
Common uses: Diuretic, common cold
Zodiac correspondence: Moon

PEPPERMINT (*Mentha Piperita*)
Also known as: Lambmint
Indigenous to: US, Europe
Sacred to: Zeus
Common uses: Nausea, gas.
Zodiac correspondence: Venus

POMEGRANATE (*Punica Granatum*)

Indigenous to: Asia

Sacred to: Hades, Hera, Persephone, Pluto

Common uses : Rind: Gargle Seeds: Diarrhea, aids digestion

Zodiac Correspondence: Mercury, Uranus, Venus

RHUBARB (*Rheum Palmatum*)

Indigenous to: Asia, but imported plants in The North Eastern US have long since gone wild.

Sacred to: Hecate

Common uses: Food, high Vitamin C, leaves are poisonous

Zodiac correspondence: Mars, Scorpio

ROWAN (*Sorbus Acuporia*)

Also known as: Sorb Apple

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Moon

Common uses: various

Zodiac correspondence: Moon

RUE (*Ruta Graveolens*)

Also known as: Herb of Grace

Indigenous to: Europe, Africa

Sacred to: Mars

Common uses: Rue causes contact dermatitis and may cause poisoning.

Zodiac correspondence: Sun, Leo

TARRAGON (*Artemisa Dracunculus*)

Also known as: Estragon

Indigenous to: Varied

Sacred to: Artemis.

Common uses: Seasoning, appetite stimulation, Dragon hunting.

Zodiac correspondence: Mars, Scorpio

WOODRUFF (*Asperula Ororato*)

Also known as: Master of The Woods, Sweet Woodruff

Indigenous to: All over

Sacred to: High Court Sidhe, Venus, Horned God

Common uses: Use small doses only for Migraine

Zodiac correspondence: Mars, Venus.

WORMWOOD (*Artemisa Absinthium*)

Also known as: Absinthe

Indigenous to: Europe

Sacred to: Artemis, Diana

Common uses: Use commercial preparations to avoid poisoning

Zodiac correspondence: Mars, Scorpio, Pluto.

Recommended reading:

THE HERB BOOK, John Lust, Benedict Lust Publications, 1974

Paperback: Bantam Books, 1974.

Wicca Craft, The Modern Witch's Book of Herbs, Magick and Dreams,
Gerina Dunwich, Citadel Press/Carol Publishing edition, 1994

Shaker Herbs: A History and Compendium, Amy Bess Miller, Clarkson
Potter, 1976

Candles

The benefit of making your own candles is that you know the wax is pure and what types of wax you put into the candle. My favorite candles for ritual are beeswax, with a heavy coat of dyed vegetable wax to give them color. A warm candle rolled in rubbed sage makes a wonderful scent when burned, and essential oils are better than "scented candle oils" for fragrance. With beeswax the natural smell is so wonderful that oils are unnecessary.

Although variances in shape occur, the "normal use" candle is a standard pillar or taper, in white or the cardinal colors for the compass points, and varying colors of altar candles for various holidays, weekdays, Magick types and purposes. The following color chart, which details candle colors and their meanings, is also good for Altar cloths and robes:

Black: Samhain, Yule, Astral Magicks, "space" Magicks, Night Magicks, Ceremonial Magicks, Saturday, Earth, Grounding, Protection, Wisdom, Dispelling, Totality, especially physical totality, the Scribe's color.

Blue, Cobalt: Samhain, Yule, Astral Magicks, Lunar Magicks, "space" Magicks, Night Magicks, Ceremonial Magick, Monday, Thursday, Protection, Wisdom, clear Thought, Logic, Emotional Control, a good "power" color.

Blue, Primary: Summer, Lughnasa, Samhain, Yule, Imbolc, Astral Magicks, Thursday, Water, Clear thought, A good color for "generic" rituals.

Blue, Sky: Spring, Beltane, Solar rituals, Imbolc, Astral Magicks, Water, Air, Clear thought, Used by people with avian spirit guide/Totems/ favorite animals, esp. Seagull, Eagle, Hawk, Kingfisher. The "bardic" color.

Brown: Lughnasa, Autumn, Samhain, Druidic Magicks, Earth, emotional Control, Craftsmanship. The Artisan's color.

Copper: Autumn, Yule, Money summoning rituals, Solar rituals, Druidic Magicks, Sunday, fire, Protection, Leadership, Love, Passion, Luck.

Gray: Yule, Imbolc, Astral Magicks, Lunar Magicks, Druidic Magicks, Fire, a good balance color, used by Druids and Wolf and Lynx people

Green, Deep (hunter): Lughnasa, Autumn, Yule, Imbolc, Night Magicks, Druidic Magick, Earth, Calming, Grounding, Strength, Protection, Logic, Emotional Control, The God in his element, a "male" color.

Green, Light: Spring, Beltane, Summer, Imbolc, Druidic Magick, Earth, Prosperity, Money, Strength, Wisdom, Emotional Control, Luck, the "Faerie color," (courtesy of Americanized Irish "little people.")

Gold: Summer, Autumn, Yule, Money summoning, Solar rituals, Fire, Lust, Passion, Priests.

Indigo: Samhain, Yule, Astral Magicks, Night Magicks, Ceremonial Magicks, Wednesday, Wisdom, Logic, Love, Passion, Music, a secondary Bardic Color.

Lavender: Spring, Beltane, Summer, Imbolc, Calming, Love, Healing.

Orange: Spring, Beltane, Summer, Lughnasa, Autumn, Samhain, Solar Rituals, Sunday, Fire, Passion.

Pink: Spring, Beltane, Friday, Calming, Love, Luck, Healing,

Peach: Spring, Beltane, Lughnasa, Friday, Calming, Love.

Red: Beltane, Summer, Lughnasa, Samhain, Yule, Ceremonial Magick, Tuesday, Fire, Strength, Protection, Leadership, Lust, Passion, Healing esp. Blood, Physical Strength, Questing, Color of the Seeker.

Rust: Lughnasa, Autumn, Samhain, Druidic Magick, Fire, Earth, Passion, Universal "Oneness."

Silver: Yule, Astral Magicks, Lunar Magicks, "space" Magicks, Monday, Air, Protection, Clear thought, Logic, Passion, Priestesses

Turquoise: Spring, Beltane, Summer, Astral Magicks, Lunar Magicks, Water, Protection, Clear thought, Logic, Luck, Healing esp. Eyes.

Violet: Samhain, Yule, Astral Magicks, Night Magicks, Ceremonial Magicks, Thursday, Saturday, Wisdom, Clear thought, Leadership, Logic, Passion, emotional control, Healing esp. Mental. The prime "Power" Color used by priests.

White: Positive workings of all sorts.

Yellow-Orange(Saffron): Spring, Beltane, Summer, Lughnasa, Autumn, Yule, Solar Rituals, Astral Magicks, Druidic Magick, Ceremonial Magick, Sunday, Fire, Wisdom, Logic, Passion, Emotional Control, Luck, Sanity, A traditional Mage-Priest and celebration Color.

Yellow: Spring, Beltane, Summer, Imbolc, Solar Rituals, Astral Magicks, Sunday, Fire, Clear thought, Passion, Healing, esp. Mental.

In some Drawing Down ceremonies, circular “Moon” and “Sun” candles are used, and one is used in the Ritual given in Book Three. In some rituals special crowns of candles are used, but fully half of my obsession with safety is because of a fire that started when hot wax from such a thing dripped on a skyclad woman, who knocked over a candle, which set the altar on fire, which would’ve done more if it wasn’t for our unique altar tool, a small fire extinguisher. Now, these were talented, safety conscious individuals who’d done that ritual before, so I can only imagine the chaos in a less structured setting. If you are going to use candles, or any heat source, at least have a bucket of water nearby!

Corn Dollies

Corn Dollies are images of beings, usually female, found preserved all over the world. Though the traditional English Wiccan corn dolly, probably based on ancient Celtic "Wheatings" would be made of wheat, barley and rye, in the Americas, Corn Dollies are made of *Zea Mays*, the grain that we just call "corn." The United States and England have been called "two countries separated by a common language" and this has been well illustrated in the debate about what is, and isn't a "real" corn dolly.

In most of the English-speaking world outside of the US, what Americans call "corn" is called "maize" and the word "corn" just means "grain." Wicca is traditionally English, and when corn dollies are spoken of in British traditional Wicca, they do not refer to goddess-shaped creations made from maize, but from barley, oats, and other "old world" grains. This is further confused by the fact that Native Americans, shakers, and early settlers in the Americas made similar creations from maize and other new world grains and called them Corn Dollies as well.

So rather than add to the debate and say one form of corn dolly is "right" and the other is "wrong." I will say instead that the corn dolly is made from the grain of primary harvest in the area. Thus, in America's Wheat country, it is made of wheat, in America's Corn country it is made of corn, and elsewhere, they are made of rice, straw, timothy, rye, oats, clover, sweetgrass and what have you. They are even sometimes made of non-grain, non-grass crops. One Coven in Maine makes them from pine, another in New Jersey from *Rosa Rugosa* hips and hay, my home coven in Syracuse, NY, made them from the

husks of sweet corn with faces cut from "lady apples" small, green apples that grow on wild apple trees and immature domesticated apple trees. All of these were acceptable to the Gods.

A Corn dolly represents the goddess as the harvest. At Lughnasa the corn dolly is placed at the altar to give thanks for the harvest. In my family practice, this corn dolly is then burned at Yule and the ashes saved and placed in the garden at spring to "remind" the plants of the previous harvest. Some traditions bury her in the spring, or burn her at Samhain, based on their personal beliefs in the representation of the Goddess. The Corn Dolly is also called the "Corn Mother," and may be given, or hung on a door, to insure prosperity.

A few Pagan books give ideas for crafting the corn dolly, a Southwestern trad I know uses Corn as their exclusive medium, but their dolls are intricate works of dried beaded corn probably dating back to indigenous peoples of their area. With a small bead drill, or a sharp pick which can be twisted, dried corn can be beaded just like most seeds.

This is ridiculously complex if your corn dollies are a one time thing that are thrown on a Samhain or Yule fire, so we make simple "shaker dollies."

There are two approaches to making them, cornhusks, dyed and folded and ready for doll making are available at craft stores, and if you want a doll to look great, they're probably what you want. Most of us, especially from the Dairy country of Upstate New York, where feed corn dots every highway, prefer the "Natural" look. Dry the cornhusks on a piece of paper in the sun and let them bleach for about four days. Right before you use them, wet them in a pot of warm water with a dash of vinegar in it, this makes them pliable. Bend and fold them into the rough shape of a woman and tie them with twine or small strips of cornhusk.

A variation on this, called "Corn Niki's" by our coven for their resemblance to a member, is the long haired corn goddess, which is usually made with green husks from the first harvest.

Corn Niki: Take the still green silk from an ear of corn and crumple the brown dry end into a ball. Use an inner (thin) husk, fold it in half, and create a narrow cylinder, with the fold along the top. Stuff the dry brown end into the cylinder, then use a small band of husk to cover the top, allowing a few wisps of silk to stick out of the front. This is a "headband" and keeps the brown from showing. Tie the headband to the cylinder with another band of husk. You should now have a head. As the hair dries, this will crinkle, but crinkle the "bangs" while they're still wet. Take an outer husk, and slit halfway to the middle with the grain twice so that you have a thin band that goes to the middle, and two thicker outer pieces. Fold the middle piece down, and set it aside. Take yet another small inner husk and wrap it around a pencil, this piece should be one half the length of the piece you just cut. Tie the ends of this piece with wire, string or a tiny piece of husk, removing the pencil before tying the second side. Pick up the piece you set aside and lift up the folded down segment on that piece. Place the rolled and tied piece under the folded segment so that you have a cross-like structure, then place the head piece so that the fold is at the back of the neck. Fold the two pieces down in front, then take another small piece of husk and create an "apron" by folding it in half. Using a piece of twine or husk under the fold of the apron, tie the whole thing together in the center, so that you have a waist. Let dry in the sun, retying and adding small pieces of husk if needed.

Allow natural drying to alter the shape, but make several, because a few will lose shape completely when dried. If desired, paint with natural dyes, or dry in a dark dry place for more color.

Crystals and Minerals

The following is a (very) partial listing of some commonly used crystals. Relying too heavily on Crystallomancy smacks a little of the “New Age” for me, but it is becoming more and more common in Wicca. The following list details the color of these crystals and stones, the element that the stone is supposed to represent, the lore that the stone has gathered and the “correspondences” of the stone, the type of Gods and forces it relates to.

Amber (Gods’ Tears)

Color: Amber

Element: Earth

Lore: Protection. It supposedly “traps” evil forces within it.

Correspondences: Protective, Druidic

Amethyst

Color: Violet

Element: Water

Lore: Supposed to protect from the “spirits” of Wine, a good piece “sings” (vibrates) when struck with a tuning fork.

Correspondences: Wine/Blood

Garnet (Earth’s Blood)

Color: Red/Violet

Element: Earth

Lore: Blood related ailments, iron deficiency, good grounding and women's stone.

Correspondences:
mother/birth

Hematite (mirror rock)

Color: Reflective silver

Elements: Air, Moon

Lore: Protection, it reflects negative energy away. Sacred to the Morrigan, called "Raven's eye."

Correspondences: Any Moon.

Malachite

Color: Green Banded, some are blue.

Element: Earth

Lore: The Money Stone, also luck, and a good stone for gardening. Protective. Often mislabeled as "green tiger's eye."

Correspondences: Luck, commerce

Quartz, Clear

Color: Clear, like glass

Element: Air

Lore: The prime Scrying crystal, also for logic and an unclouded mind.

Correspondence: Magick

Quartz, Rose

Color: Clear w/Pink or cloudy pink

Element: Air

Lore: An imagination releaser, good for kids. Correspondance: Love, dreams

Quartz, Blue

Color: Pale blue or clear with blue

Elements: Air, Water

Lore: A good concentration stone, but expensive, substitute: Blue lace agate, Turquoise, Aquamarine.

Correspondences: Lunar, thunder and rain.

Quartz, smoke or Smoky Topaz

Color: Clear/yellow with gray /brown gray

Elements: Air, Fire

Lore: A good protective and astral stone, it is said to work on all parts of the self. It either works for you or it doesn't, very "temperamental" stone, good for variable people, good stone for someone working through MPD or similar "difference of order."

Correspondences: Astral, Smoke, Air, Fire, Thunder.

Quartz, Violet see Amethyst

Snowflake Obsidian

Color: Black w/white, gray

Element: Fire

Lore: Burn ease, fire prevention, toss a piece in BBQ pit to whiten coals, used to avoid snow problems.

Correspondences: unknown

Tiger's Eye, Blue

Color: Multi-blue, reflective.

Elements: Water, Air

Lore: Good for airline fears and boats, wind calling, also called "Siberian Tiger's eye," "Hawk's/Falcon's eye."

Correspondences: Astral travel, flight

Tiger's Eye, Brown

Color: Multi-brown, reflective.

Elements: Fire, Earth

Lore: Like Hematite, it "reflects" danger away, only this is said to shatter it into multiple reflections that direct toward the one causing it.

Correspondences: Said to be sacred to "cat" Gods, like Bast.

Tiger's Eye, Red

Color: Multired, reflective

Element: Fire

Lore: Physical protection, swordsmithing, Phoenix, Brigid and physical prowess.

Correspondences: Fire/Combat

Turquoise

Color: Azure

Elements: Air, Water

Lore: Protection, verbal prowess, the bard's stone. General protection. A good stone to "tune in" to for beginners.

Correspondences: Music, Poetry

Divination and the Last of the True Scientists.

Divination is the art of discovering that which is hidden. This doesn't mean that all diviners are fortune tellers, or that, by divining, you plan to discover things you didn't have the right to know. We believe that information is power, and that, if the Gods forbade this information to us, we would not be able to discover it. When we divine, it is either within a ritual context, or meditated on for quite a while. When the ethics are in dispute, most will opt to not risk it, but the Gods gave us right and wrong, and one of our tools is the ability to discern them. Sometimes, divination is obviously wrong, especially when used unnecessarily, let your conscious be your guide.

There are two main forms of divination used by Wiccans, excluding Tarot, Numerology, Astrology and Rune-Casting, which require less extraordinary ability and tell their secrets more through randomization and synchronicity than pure (albeit influenced) conjecture. Pattern Work (not to be confused with path-working) shows what results a theoretical action will have, and is usually used by psychics. At its least, Pattern Work is the application of logical theorizing to the present, and can be detailed in a series of "and," "or" and "if-then" statements applied with the recognition of patterns or synchronicity. For a particularly base example, a friend (and switchboard operator) had noticed an unusual number of extra "T's," "W's" and "O's" appearing on her word processor. Emboldened, she played the number "896" which was both part of her phone number (and the numbers

for TWO) and the month/year of her second anniversary. The number drawn was "222."

Astral and dream Pattern Work is the act performing pattern work while asleep or projecting, to allow the greater consciousness to fill in where we cannot. Some psychics see patterns as colors and designs, which change as decisions are made, others see the actual events alter. "Tuning in" to the patterns requires a strong attention to detail, and the realization that the slightest action can alter the Patterns completely. It's very easy to get caught up within the patterns and "lose" yourself, so with Pattern Work, as in all things, moderation.

The more common form of Divination is scrying, which is the "classical" divination, including the cliché-ridden Crystal or Mirror gazing. The Magickal Mirror existed long before Snow White's beautiful but misguided stepmother gazed into one and wasn't pleased by her looks, and the Crystal Ball was too expensive an item for many of the charlatans usually associated with it, having long been delegated to the realm of the "professional" metaphysicist, usually no more than the town leech.

Tradition decrees that the Crystal ball be clear, preferably quartz, and lit only by candle or moonlight, but it seems that people respond differently to different Crystals. A friend has a sphere of blue lace agate that she divines in, another uses the face of a crystal prism which is hung in his window to gather the power of the sun. Although the traditional crystal ball of the motion picture industry is kept in an ornate stand, often metal, the crystal ball of the scryer rests on black cloth, usually velvet, which is occasionally draped over a stand to prevent scratching and give an ideal "blank" background. I've been told that using different color cloths influences the outcome, and are especially powerful for discerning information geared toward certain people or things associated with that color.

Scrying mirrors are also decreed by tradition to a few distinct forms, but the personalization of your mirror is what makes it work, not getting all of the Theban script in the proper alignment! Although usually

black, often concave and rarely seen in daylight, the scrying mirror is personal, and it's the person who needs to feel comfortable.

If you've been doing Wicca or Metaphysics for a while, you're probably most comfortable in a circle. After it's cast, try doing the air visualization to "free your mind." Then, gaze deeply into the mirror or ball. Blink, shift, scratch, cough, and move normally, don't stare like a television medium! If you do stare, all that you'll see is spots, mist, and all the other creatures of eyestrain, and trust me, eyestrain sucks. If you can't blank your mind, repeat a nonsense word in your head. This sounds bizarre, but I've been known to meditate on the phrase "blah, blah, blah," while scrying. It occupies my outer mind, like the music I play to write, or having the TV on while I study, while my inner mind can concentrate on the activity at hand. It has been my experience that as you awaken your brain, you need more stimuli, and I envy anyone who can sit in the darkness and focus their entire mind onto one thing, I wish I could!

Probably not the first time, but eventually as you scry (limit yourself to one half hour at a time at first) you'll begin to see misty forms in the surface, whether these are no more than cloud-like shapes waiting for interpretation or pictures that slowly form changes from person to person, but you will see something with persistence. If you can't get a mirror or ball, try a cup, bowl or plate of water. Black plates and bowls are often available at housewares shops for under two dollars, and make great containers for scrying water.

My favorite scrying mirror was a piece of windowpane in a frame, the back of which was spray painted copper. Initially, this mirror was meant to go onto the altar under a large copper censer, to keep ash from hitting the altar cloth and to reflect its little light toward the copper ceiling of the temple (rescued from an old theater before it was demolished.) I was cleaning the mirror one last time, filling the frame with a salt-water solution, and rinsing it in rainwater (it was raining, which made this quite easy.) I've always been very in-tune with storms, and as I was gazing into this mirror absentmindedly (the best way to gaze,) I caught a flash of reddish lightning in it, that lasted at

least two seconds. The only problem was that, while it was raining, it wasn't storming. I contemplated the sky for a few minutes after this, trying to figure out where the lightning flash had come from. I set down the mirror, and went to sit down on the porch when a very red flash of lightning crashed overhead, striking a tree less than 100 meters away and leaving me with spots in my eyes and a migraine that lasted a few hours. There is no doubt in my mind that I was warned not to look up at this lightning flash by this little mirror, which was nicknamed "The Little Mirror that Could." For about three months I used this mirror to try to find out everything I could, to no avail. Sure enough though, this mirror glowed every time there was a storm coming, and when a fellow student in a storm prone area noticed the glow while visiting, I gave it to him.

The story of this mirror's suicide is especially fascinating. This same student was on the phone with me when The Little Mirror that Could leapt off the wall and shattered into about fifty pieces. While we were talking, trying to figure out what happened, he looked out his window and said that it looked very ominous. Another minute later his emergency weather radio went off, there was a tornado in his area. As he went into the basement, as local sirens squealed and he stayed on the line with me, courtesy of cellular miracles, but was blacked out after a while. An hour later he called back. The twister had passed not two hundred yards from his house, following the road. Most of his windows on one side were broken, and he had a cut from a jar of pickles bursting in the basement, but the house, cats, chickens and dogs were fine. We were both positive the mirror had warned him of this, so we went to make another one, going together to a friends house, about 10 miles away from his, three days later. When we asked for another pane of glass (he'd given me the first one out of a box he had) he said he had none, because three days earlier the entire contents of the box were destroyed when a nearby tornado knocked over his tool shed. With a little calculation, we figured the panes had been destroyed at the same time his mirror had fallen.

The ways that power effects objects are not yet fully understood to us, but neither were magnetism or gravity at one time. As humanity grows and learns, a lot of what we have "known all along" will become common knowledge outside of our community. Scrying is just that, an untapped, unknown power which we do without understanding. Life is not a cartoon, just because you don't know about gravity doesn't mean that you're capable of ignoring it. We don't need a "reason" why things fall, because they do, whether we want them to or not, and scrying is the same way, it works, but we just don't know why.

Metaphysics and the UFO controversy share the dubious distinction of being the only things that science expects complete proof of before and without experimentation. It just goes against scientific theory to expect proof to materialize without work. DNA was a theory, germs were a theory, the atom was a theory, and without experimentation, these theories would've remained "untrue" to the public. WE are the only scientists that Metaphysics has, because the age of unique scientific discovery has passed. Much of science doesn't want to discover new things, just new aspects of old things. We need to keep documentation of what we do, so that we can discover all the "new" things out there, and prove them.

I suggest a separate journal for experimentation with Metaphysics, and this includes all Magickal workings outside of ritual, not just scrying. Use a separate page for each experiment; describe in detail the tools, steps taken, feelings, and results. Note the date, time, phase of the moon, everything you can. YOU are the last of the True Scientists.

Five Common Ways of raising power

I know that many rituals call for power to be raised without saying how. This isn't an oversight on anyone's part. Raising power is so personal that the idea of "telling" a person or a group of people how to do it seems preposterous. I've noticed a trend toward five types of power raising in particular, especially in larger circles. These are by no means the only or the "right" ways to raise power. The Five I've chosen are expandable, and can be used together in any number of combinations. Have fun!

1: Drumming: Drumming is fairly self-explanatory. Most people use a "heart" beat that they increase in speed and complexity as they raise the power. I've felt my own heart increase with the drum, it can be very powerful. I feel it necessary to say that not everybody drums well, and that it's not (as at least one drummer I know says,) something you are born with. It takes practice for many of us to become that rhythmic, and the idea that EVERYONE needs to be banging on something for drumming to work is insane. I've seen many circles use only one drummer to raise power, and for many of us, just being there is enough. Increasing speed and complexity are a common part of power raising, as more power is raised, and the air begins to tingle with anticipation, one would have to work harder to not speed up, and they'd diminish their usefulness, so relax and let it go. When the power has reached it peak, the drummers stop, often voicing a monosyllable that pushes the power. "Ra, Ma, Ha, Ho, and Ay" all have special meanings in different Trads, but research or spontaneity are equally as acceptable.

2: Dancing Like drumming, dancing is something not everyone can do. Power raising dances, however, tend to be very simplistic, like holding hands and twirling around the circle. It's easy to raise power this way, if occasionally dizzying. Combined with drumming or chanting, dancing can be a simple way to get everyone involved and is a fairly quick method of power raising. As with drumming, the best way to let the power out that you raise from dancing is to stop suddenly, often by ending an accompanying beat, and shouting out a monosyllable, preferably while collapsing.

3: Chanting There are three schools of chanting in Wicca, one says that chants must be ancient words and phrases, almost inevitably in another language. These are often hard to say and even harder to remember. The second school allows translated chants, but they usually are overly complex small prayers, which are often hard to memorize. The final school, the method of chanting that I have found most powerful, is the simplest.

You may've noticed I **always** prefer the simplest, and before I describe fully this school of chanting, I'd like to explain why, in Ritual, I follow the Rule of KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid.)

Religion must always be a matter of intense Self. No one has the right to enforce or inflict their religion upon someone. In a group setting, complexity easily causes a rift to develop between people. By using things that only a few people can do, you limit the group to those who participate, and those who can't. In every group I've been in there is at least one person whose abilities aren't even close to everyone else's. Wicca needs to avoid becoming elitist, and many covens already seem to have an idea of what members **should** be like. By keeping the recipe for ritual simple, any group may form a firm basis in practice before attempting more difficult maneuvers. Keep it simple, stupid!

The preferred method of chanting I try to teach all groups is personal chanting, in which everyone in a group chants what is on their mind, be it. "East, East, Yea East," or "Almighty Zeus, Sky Father Supreme," or even my son's spontaneous chant at three years old "Circle, Circle, Power Circle." The amount of power felt with this

method is astounding, and a person who wants to use an old chant, translated or not, is welcome. The increase in power at the end is done by increasing volume, with everyone ending with the same word or phrase, often the "So" of "That it be so," an easier to end variation on "So mote it Be."

4:Music Weaving This is not a simple method. Often, this accompanies drumming, and is prevalent in groups with many musicians and singers. A simple melody is played or sung, a second instrument comes in after the first, with a similar melody played above it, a third in a lower harmony to the first, a fourth in harmony with the second, a fifth in harmony with the third, and so forth. The power raised and spells worked this way are intense, but require practice and a good many skills. Harper Wicca, a musical trad, uses this exclusively.

5:Tone Raising While not as complex as music weaving, tone raising is best done with at least one person with perfect pitch and a strong voice. Beginning usually at A or C, the group uses a single syllable to match the leaders tone or harmonize. The leader raises the tone or chord and allows the group to increase in pitch and volume, with those incapable of higher notes dropping down an octave (singing the same note lower) when the volume is maximized, everyone shouts out the syllable and "lets" the power go.

Gods and Goddesses

A few years ago, a friend and I began compilation of a database of deities, knowing that such a thing would be a life's work. It grows to this day, with many of the entries consisting of only a name and a culture. The following list is comprised of some of the more complete entries. It is, by far, a partial list, with many of the Gods left out either by lack of knowledge, lack of space or lack of a clear head. I've not included some Gods who are very rare to Wicca, like Eris and Loki (I have enough Eris and Loki in my life, anyway) and I have also removed a few whose contrasting mythos required too in-depth an explanation for this format, but some "evil" gods, like Angra Mamyu, who are never used in Wicca, are included as comparisons or because they make up a central part of a pantheon.

I've stayed away from recent Gods, like those from the genres of fantasy and science fiction, so if you find a "character" within, it was the author of the Sci-fi, and not I, who pinched a name. Also, I've avoided "new" definitions of Gods, the ones that have popped up in many books written by people with no knowledge beyond a few college courses in Mythology. Good works on Mythology are detectable in two ways, use of materials relating to the culture from which the myth came, and use of the phrase, "but we can't be sure of this." Anyone who tells you that they "know" the truth about the worship of these gods had better shush, or show you their time machine.

The mythology of these deities is yours to discover, I've only included a brief description, complete with the sacred color, if any, of the God, and the Totemic spirit from which many of them evolved. Totemism is neither new nor exclusively Native American, in pre-Grecian days, for

instance, the eagle was a sacred bird, as Greece grew, Eagle became known as Zeus, as the people progressed further, Zeus took on human qualities, the result, in later Grecian religion, was Zeus, a God, whose "favorite" bird was an eagle and whose symbol was the eagle. Similar events led to the creation/discovery of most gods in modern and early religion. It is because of the Wiccan reawakening to animal spirituality that I've included these spirits, in the hope that those seeking may find the name of their face of God(dess) within.

I feel I must add that when I refer within this mini-Deiology to "modern" gods, I am speaking of modern in the anthropological sense, generally post-roman empire "modern" not in the past few years. Also, in the case of culture, Gallic is of Gaul (ancient France and much of the Alps), Gaelic is of ancient Ireland but not Celtic, Celtic is of Ancient Scotland, Ireland, some parts of Wales and some parts of Europe, Welsh is Welsh but not Celtic, Greek is pre-Roman Empire Greece, Roman is of the Roman empire. Likewise, Etruscan and Italian are not Roman, even though much of Roman mythology was shared by them, and Persian and Sumerian, which are sub-groups of Early Indo European, are those things that my research showed to be exclusive to Persia and Sumeria. Norse is Northern Germanic, primarily Danish and Scandinavian, but German is of Germany, specifically. I am a priestess, not an Anthropologist, so while my research has been extensive, I am sure I have faults herein. Use it as a starting point for further research, not as the final destination.

Name: Aditi **Culture:** Vedic **Sex:** F **Color:** Red **Animal:** None
Notes: Mother of Gods, Ever-mother.

Name: Adon **Culture:** Phoenician **Sex:** M **Color:** Any **Animal:** Any
Notes: Any God, Male God, substitute for "Lord."

Name: Adonis **Culture:** Greek, Phoenician **Sex:** M **Color:** None
Animal: None

Notes: Beauty, Lust, Male vanity, Brotherhood, Strength, Homosexuality, esp. Male.

Name: Aegir **Culture:** Norse **Sex:** M **Color:** White **Animal:** All sea
Notes: God of the Sea, Wind, Storms and sailors

Name: Agni **Culture:** Hindu **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None
Notes: God of Fire, later a Sun God. He who is the agent of sacrifice.

Name: Ahura Mazda **Culture:** Persian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None
Notes: God of Goodness, valor, truth, etc.

Name: Allatu **Culture:** Babylonian /Carthagian **Sex:** F **Color:** None
Animal: None
Notes: A Goddess of the dead and the underworld.

Name: Ammon **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Ram
Notes: Amon, Amun, Sun God.

Name: Amon/Amon-Ra **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold
Animal: Ram
Notes: Sun God of later Egypt, paired with Ra until they became a single god, "The Lord of The Terrestrial Thrones." Amon-Ra was reincarnated as the present Lord or Lords who were in position to lay claim to "god on earth" status.

Name: Angra Mamyu **Culture:** Persian **Sex:** M **Color:** Black **Animal:** None
Notes: The God of Evil, treachery, etc.

Name: Anu **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue **Animal:** None
Notes: God of Heaven, Sky Lord, Husband of Ki.

Name: Anu **Culture:** Gaelic/Celtic **Sex:** F **Color:** Green **Animal:** None
Notes: Sometimes called “sister” of Danu, the name Anu is also said to be the “Old name” for Erin, the goddess of the land of Ireland.

Name: Amphitrite **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Blue **Animal:** Ocean Mammals

Notes: Goddess of the sea, and daughter of Nereus and Doris, Amphitrite was either wife or rival or both to Poseidon and was the one, of the two, more likely to grant mercy to sailors. Amphitrite mythology is sparse and much of it dates to modern times.

Name: Anubis **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Black **Animal:** Jackal
Notes: The Guard of the Dead, protector of sacred things. Anubis was really popular with the Greek royalty of Egypt, and may’ve originated more from Greek ideology than Egyptian.

Name: Aphrodite **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Seafoam **Animal:** Dove or Dolphin.
Notes: Goddess of love, also a lesser goddess of the sea and war.

Name: Apollo **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Lion, Horse
Notes: Sun God, Arts and enlightenment, as well.

Name: Apsu **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue **Animal:** Water
Notes: Lord of Chaos, River God, consort of Tiamat.

Name: Aradia **Culture:** Italian **Sex:** F **Color:** Silver **Animal:** Seagull(?)
Notes: Goddess of Lunar Magick, daughter of Diana, Matron of Witches, Aradia also appears as daughter (by his/her own creation) of Dianus. Said to be the “goddess” of the Charge of the Goddess but this may be a rumor caused by confusion over the Charge’s (and Wicca’s) basis. Leland’s Poem, Aradia, based on a meeting with a woman named Magdalena who claimed to practice “the old religion” is the

Primary Text for Aradia worship. No one except Leland ever saw or heard of this Magdalena, and it is this little Wiccan's unpopular opinion that if she existed at all, her "old religion" was made up to play with the ignorant tourist.

Name: Ares **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Red, Black **Animal:** Ram
Notes: God of War and the brutality of tactics, who takes his sacrifices from blood spilled in war and gets beaten by Athena.

Name: Arianrhod **Culture:** Welsh **Sex:** F **Color:** Silver **Animal:** None
Notes: Goddess of the Stars. Also (Celtic) Sidhe woman who watches over standing stones. The Goddess of initiation, she appears in many Cornish Fam-Trad's with a very different face than that she receives in modern Wicca.

Name: Artemis **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** White **Animal:** All ESP. deer, elk
Notes: Goddess of the hunt whose bow is the crescent moon.

Name: Artio **Culture:** Gallic **Sex:** F **Color:** Brown **Animal:** Bear
Notes: Ancient Gallic Goddess of Bears, little is known about Artio except that she was the Guardian of the City of Berne.

Name: Asklepios **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Green **Animal:** Snake
Notes: God of medicine.

Name: Astarte **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Red **Animal:** Sphinx
Notes: Goddess of Love, esp. Fertility, Marriage, considered a Goddess of Mature Love.

Name: Astoreth **Culture:** Phoenician **Sex:** F **Color:** Red, Black **Animal:** None
Notes: Ishtar.

Name: Athena **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Gray, White **Animal:** Owl, Goat

Notes: Goddess of protection, strength, balanced Mind/body/spirit. Matron of Athens.

Name: Aton **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Snake

Notes: Another Sun God, also Atun, Atom, Atum

Name: Bast (Bastet) **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** F **Color:** Black, Green **Animal:** Cat

Notes: Protection, felinity, seeing in the dark, swiftness of action and other "cat" traits.

Name: Bel **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Brown **Animal:** None

Notes: Earth.

Name: Bellona **Culture:** Italian/late Rome **Sex:** F **Color:** Violet **Animal:** Hawk

Notes: Goddess of war, esp. tactical maneuvers. Her followers were especially violent.

Name: Brahma **Culture:** Hindu **Sex:** M **Color:** None **Animal:** None

Notes: Creator, all-father.

Name: Brigid **Culture:** Celtic **Sex:** F **Color:** Red/Black **Animal:** Hawk

Notes: The Two faced Goddess, scarred on one side, beautiful on the other, Brigid is Goddess of Fire and the Forge, and Goddess of Poetry and beauty.

Name: Ceres **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** Gold **Plant:** Any grain

Notes: The Goddess Demeter, although she is sometimes confused with her own daughter, Kore.

Name: Cernunnos **Culture:** Celtic, (Gallic and Welsh) **Sex:** M **Color:** None **ANIMAL:** Deer

Notes: Horned God of the Hunt and Winter also Kernunnous, Kerne, Cerne, Herne.

Name: Cerridwen **Culture:** Welsh **Sex:** F **Color:** Varies **Animal:** All

Notes: Goddess of the harvest, esp. the final harvest. The forth face of the moon.

Name: Coleus **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Hawk

Notes: Sun God, a synthesis of Ormazd and Zeus.

Name: Cybele **Culture:** Phrygian **Sex:** F **Color:** None **Animal:** None

Notes: Mother Goddess, Later Romanized, see Rhea.

Name: Danu (1) **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Blue **Animal:** Eagle

Notes: Mother of Perseus, Danu or Danae wasn't a goddess, but one of many women Zeus fell in Love with. Poseidon offered Danu safe passage across the sea to a far off land. In one legend, it is believed that when she died Zeus granted her eternal life on Olympus. Another says that she was spirited far away to a land where the rest of her children were Gods.

Name: Danu (2) **Culture:** Celtic, Gaelic **Sex:** F **Color:** Red **Animal:** Whale

Notes: Danu was the mother of the Sidhe, the Celtic Gods, she was said to come from a far off land. In some so-called Celtic Mythology, Danu was the Wife of Jupiter, but I think that was just a combination of coincidence and Roman conversion techniques.

Name: Danu (3) **Culture:** Vedic **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Serpent

Notes: Mother to the Donavan, the "bad guys" of the Vedas. The Restrainer.

Name: Demeter **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Gold **Plant:** Grain

Notes: The Grain mother, mother of Persephone.

Name: Diana **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** Blue/Silver **Animal:** Deer
Notes: Lunar Goddess, Artemis. sometimes Selene

Name: Diancecht **Culture:** Celtic, mostly Gaelic **Sex:** M **Color:** White
Animal: Snake and Fish.
Notes: God of Medicine.

Name: Dionysos **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Red **Plant:** Grape,
Apple
Notes: God of the Cultivated Vine.

Name: Dumuzi **Culture:** Sumerian **Sex:** M **Color:** None **Plant:** Date
Palm
Notes: Lord of the Marshes, fertile land and the Date Palm. Husband
of Inanna, Thamuz.

Name: Ea **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue/black **Animal:**
Shark
Notes: God of waters, the Abyss.

Name: El **Culture:** Phoenician and/or Canaanite (?) **Sex:** M **Color:**
White **Animal:** Bull
Notes: Father of All Gods, Power of Powers, Adon, Adoni, Creator.

Name: Enki **Culture:** Sumerian **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue/Black **Animal:**
Fish
Notes: Ea

Name: Epona **Culture:** Gallic **Sex:** F **Color:** Brown/White **Animal:**
Horse
Notes: Goddess and protector of horses, Epona was adopted by both the
Romans and the Celts. She was said to choose a General by appearing as

a white horse and leading him into battle. One wonders if Napoleon knew this.

Name: Ereshkigal **Culture:** Sumerian **Sex:** F **Color:** None **Animal:** None

Notes: Allatu

Name: Eros **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** Non **Color:** Red **Animal:** Dove

Notes: Cupid or Amor, See Hermaphrodite

Name: Eshmun **Culture:** Phoenician **Sex:** M **Color:** Green **Animal:** Snake

Notes: An early Asklepius

Name: Flora **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** Pink **Plant:** All flowers

Notes: Goddess of flowers, Beltane, sometimes Persephone

Name: Fortuna **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** None **Animal:** None

Notes: Goddess of Luck, Tyche.

Name: Gad **Culture:** Syrian **Sex:** F **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None

Notes: Fortuna

Name: Gaia/Gaea **Culture:** Greek/Norse **Sex:** F **Color:** Green **Animal:** All

Notes: The Entity Terra, protector of all non-human things, Earth Mother.

Name: Geb **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Brown **Animal:** None

Notes: Earth.

Name: Geshtinanna **Culture:** Sumerian **Sex:** F **Color:** Wine **Plant:** Grape

Notes: Much like Dionysus, paired, they make a wonderful duo to pray to when your vineyard is flooding.

Name: Gilbil **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Orange **Animal:** Lizard

Notes: Fire.

Name: Hades **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Black/Yellow **Animal:** Horse, Dog

Notes: The name is literally “unseen.” Lord of the underworld, the one who chooses the fate of the dead.

Name: Hecate **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Bat

Notes: Goddess of Caves, Magick and the waning and new moon.

Name: Hera **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Red **Animal:** Peacock

Notes: Goddess of Marriage, retribution, fairplay, fiery and temperamental.

Name: Hermaphrodite **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** Both **Color:** None **Animal:** None

Notes: Eros, before he was “toned down.” The exact union of the Gods Hermes and Aphrodite, a god of passion.

Name: Hestia **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Brown **Animal:** Hound

Notes: Goddess of the Hearth, Home, Watcher over children and families.

Name: Horus **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Hawk

Notes: Sun God, adopted by Greeks, also god of Time, Divination and Magick.

Name: Hypnos **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue **Plant:** Poppy

Notes: See Somnus.

Name: Inanna **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** F **Color:** Green **Plant:** Date Palm

Notes: Great Mother, All mother, Goddess of Love, the Moon, Date Mother, Ishtar.

Name: Indra **Culture:** Hindu **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue **Animal:** None

Notes: Guardian of Heaven.

Name: Isis **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Hawk

Notes: All Mother, Triformis.

Name: Istar/Ishtar **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Lion

Notes: Goddess of War, Love and more.

Name: Jovis **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Eagle

Notes: Jupiter.

Name: Juno **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** Red **Animal:** Peacock

Notes: Hera.

Name: Jupiter **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Eagle

Notes: Literally "Zeus Pater" Father Zeus, Father of Gods.

Name: Kali **Culture:** Hindu **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** None

Notes: Black Kali, Nemesis. Protector of Women and Goddess of Creation via destruction.

Name: Kerridwen **Culture:** Celtic/Welsh **Sex:** F **Color:** Varies **Animal:** All

Notes: See Cerridwen

Name: Ki **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** F **Color:** None **Animal:** None

Notes: Wife of Anu, Earth, Gaea.

Name: Lug(h) **Culture:** Celtic esp. Gaelic **Sex:** M **Color:** White **Animal:** Lynx
Notes: God of Justice.

Name: Maat **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Cat
Notes: Goddess of vengeance and reward, the fourth face.

Name: Marduk **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** White **Animal:** None
Notes: King of the Gods.

Name: Mars **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Black, Red **Animal:** Bull, Wolf
Notes: Ares

Name: Mercurius **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Red **Animal:** Hart, Falcon
Notes: Mercury, Lord of children, news, also commerce, inspiration.

Name: Minerva **Culture:** Etruscan **Sex:** F **Color:** Gray **Animal:** Owl
Notes: Athena

Name: Mitha/Mitra/Mithras **Culture:** Hindu/Persian/Roman/Egyptian
Sex: M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Eagle
Notes: Protector, Warrior, Key of knowledge. Sun God, establisher of Laws. The celestial negotiator.

Name: Morpheus **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Violet **Plant:** Poppy
Notes: Lord of Dreams.

Name: Morrigan, The **Culture:** Celtic **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Raven/Crow
Notes: The Battle Raven, Goddess of War, both for justice and for greed. Not to be confused with the Arthurian character Morgana.

Name: Morrighu **Culture:** Gaelic **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Raven/
Crow

Notes: See Morrigan, The.

Name: Nemesis **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Griffon

Notes: The Fourth Face of the Goddess, Dispenser of Justice. In "Maiden/Mother/Crone" beliefs, Nemesis is the New Moon, while Hecate is the waning moon. It's interesting to note that most triple goddesses include Nemesis as the new moon but never mention her, as if that could keep her from noticing the little bits of "Bad Karma" we accumulate!

Name: Nepthys **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Cat

Notes: Goddess of Childbirth, protector of Midwives

Name: Neptune **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue **Animal:** Dolphin

Notes: See Poseidon

Name: Nuadu **Culture:** Celtic **Sex:** M **Color:** Silver **Animal:** Horse

Notes: The Divine Father

Name: Nuit **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Cat

Notes: See Nut

Name: Nut **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** F **Color:** Black **Animal:** Cat

Notes: Goddess of the Night, Stars, All mother.

Name: Odin **Culture:** Norse **Sex:** M **Color:** White **Animal:** Wolf

Notes: The lord of male changes...Child...lover...husband...father...lord.

Name: Ormazd **Culture:** Persian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None

Notes: See Ahura Mazda

Name: Osiris **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Silver **Animal:** Hawk
Notes: The former king, Star king, he who was, lord of the Afterworld

Name: Pan/Pan Megas **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Black **Animal:** Satyr
Notes: God of sexuality and freedom.

Name: Persephone **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Rose **Plant:** Flowers
Notes: Goddess of Spring and Winter, Goddess of Flowers

Name: Pluto **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Black **Animal:** Dog
Notes: See Hades

Name: Poseidon **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Blue **Animal:** Dolphin
Notes: Lord of the Seas.

Name: Prajapati **Culture:** Vedic **Sex:** M **Color:** None **Animal:** None
Notes: All father, successor to Varuna

Name: Psyche **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Violet **Animal:** Butterfly
Notes: Goddess of intellect, innocence, perfect love. Lust tempered into love, later Goddess of ESP and mental powers

Name: Ra **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Hawk
Notes: Sun God, he who incarnates as the Lord of Lords

Name: Rhea **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** Brown **Animal:** All
Notes: Replaced Gaea, later adopted the characteristics of Cybele

Name: Selene **Culture:** Ancient Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Blue **Animal:** none
Notes: Ancient Goddess of Motherhood and the full moon

Name: Shamash **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Birds

Notes: Sun God

Name: Silvanus **Culture:** Gallic **Sex:** M **Color:** White **Animal:** Wolf

Notes: The Father Wolf, hunter supreme and all-around good guy. Father God.

Name: Somus **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Red **Plant:** Poppy

Notes: God of Sleep and healing

Name: Sucellus **Culture:** Gallic **Sex:** M **Color:** Gray **Animal:** Wolf

Notes: The Lone Wolf, The Ravager

Name: Tanit **Culture:** Carthaginian **Sex:** F **Color:** Silver **Animal:** Hart

Notes: Artemis

Name: Thamuz/Tamuz **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** M **Color:** Green

Plant: Date Palm

Notes: Husband of Ishtar, A Male Persephone

Name: Thanatos **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None

Notes: God of the actual death process.

Name: Themis **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** F **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Eagle

Notes: Goddess of justice, inspirer of Laws. Pagan Patron Goddess of the USA

Name: Thor **Culture:** Norse **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None

Notes: God of Storms, Justice, mines and war, protector of the common man from the fury of his brethren

Name: Thoth **Culture:** Egyptian **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None

Notes: God of spirit, numbers, the scholar.

Name: Tiamat **Culture:** Babylonian **Sex:** F **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Dragon

Notes: Dragon of Chaos, bringer of Salt Water.

Name: Triformis **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F,F,F **Color:** Gold **Plant:** Trillium

Notes: The Triple Goddess. Also used to describe (incorrectly) Hecate.

Name: Typhon **Culture:** Greek **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Rat

Notes: Set

Name: Tyr **Culture:** Norse **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Horse

Notes: The Warrior god, God of total justice and fair play.

Name: Varuna **Culture:** Hindu/Vedic **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Ram

Notes: High God of the Vedas

Name: Venus **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Dove

Notes: Aphrodite

Name: Vesta **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** F **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None

Notes: Goddess of Fire, keeper of the sacred flame.

Name: Vishnu **Culture:** Hindu/Vedic **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** Fish

Notes: All Father, lord of oceans.

Name: Vulcanus **Culture:** Roman **Sex:** M **Color:** Gold **Animal:** None

Notes: Fire, volcanoes, later smithing and steel.

Name: Wodan **Culture:** German **Sex:** M **Color:** Gray **Animal:** Wolf

Notes: Varied, but mostly a combination of Odin and Sylvanus

Holiday and Lunar Recipes

Holiday recipes:

The Following are some of the best recipes for the holidays. Many of the foods are traditional, but some are not. It is quite eclectic. There are few dairy products because my life partner cannot have milk products beyond small quantities. Where almond "milk" is called for, an equal amount of regular milk may be used, but soy or rice milks may be too thin, so experiment with a lesser amount. Where possible, I've also included simple variations on cake mixes or pre-prepared foods for those who are cooking impaired.

The Liminal Holidays:

Spring:

Early spring recipes include those things with young herbs, sprouts and seeds, like Herb Bread, Granola Muffins, Spring Rice and Lemon-Poppy Seed Cupcakes

Green Herb Bread:

1 1/2 cup white flour

1/2 cup oatmeal

1 cup whole wheat flour

1 1/3 cup hot but not boiling water

1 tablespoon each young shoots of: dill, tarragon, parsley, chives, sage
(can be made with grown, dry herbs, but allow them to hydrate in an equal amount of hot water.)

1/2 teaspoon each ground, dried Rosemary and Savory

Dash salt or 1 pinch dried, powdered kelp

1 packet of yeast

2 tablespoons vegetable shortening or 3 tablespoons almond butter

1 tablespoon honey

Mix together the flours and oatmeal, let sit. Combine in a small pan the shortening, herbs, salt, honey and water, heat to hot but not boiling, add yeast and stir rapidly, removing from heat. Mix into dry ingredients and beat with a bread kneader, gloved hand or thick wooden spoon. Cover lightly, then let rise 30 minutes to an in a warm area or an oven that was heated to 250° and turned off twenty minutes before.

Pat down dough and mix again, grease a loaf pan or a round cake pan. Place dough into pan and let rise 30 minutes.

Heat oven to 375°, brush top of loaf with a small amount of oil, then sprinkle with oats, and a few bits of dried herbs. Bake until loaf is golden and sounds hollow when softly thumped with a wooden spoon. 25-40 minutes.

Granola Muffins:

1 1/2 cups flour(a mix of white and whole wheat with a dash of oat bran is the best)

1 cup granola (we used a low fat granola with freeze dried raspberries.)

1/3 cup wheat germ (optional, we used a commercially prepared honey roasted version)

4 tablespoons baking powder

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1/2 cup lowfat milk

1 large egg or two ounces egg substitute

1 cup dried or fresh fruit (with a little bit of sugar if it is "sour")

1/3 cup orange or clover honey, or similar "light" honey

Combine dry ingredients in a bowl or bag, combine wet/moist ingredients in a bowl. Slowly add dry to wet, adding more milk if the batter is too sticky. It should be thick, sticky batter. Spoon into 12 muffin cups and bake in an oven that has been preheated to 400° for about fifteen minutes. These burn very easily, so remove them from pan at once!

Spring Rice:

3 cups hot cooked rice

1 cup each cooked carrots, corn, yellow squash and red peppers diced finely.

dash salt

2 tablespoons vegetable juice.

Combine all ingredients, mix and serve, great made with leftovers.

Lemon-poppy seed cupcakes:

Prepared lemon cake mix

Prepared lemon frosting

2/3 cup poppy seeds soaked in hot water and allowed to sit overnight

More poppy seeds

Follow the mix's directions, adding the strained 2/3 cups poppy seeds with the other ingredients, and bake as per the instructions for cupcakes. Frost cooled cupcakes and sprinkle lightly with dried poppy seeds.

Summer:

Summer solstice celebrations are often held outside and include feasts of the first fruits.

Fruit salads are pretty self-explanatory, but this recipe combines mini-tarts, starfruit and strawberries, and pulls it off with only ten minutes in the oven.

12 mini tart shells for baking

1 can strawberry pie filling

1 starfruit sliced into 12 thin star pieces.

Fill shells with filling, bake in a 300° oven for eight to ten minutes.

Chill, top with starfruit.

Guacamole

(a little non-traditional, but Wiccans and tortilla chips are inseparable, so we use a bright avocado dip in our Summer solstice feast.)

3 avocados, peeled and mashed, use two very ripe mashed and one semi-ripe, diced for best texture.

2 diced tomatoes or 5 diced Roma tomatoes

1 large sweet onion, diced

1 tablespoon finely diced garlic

1/2 red bell pepper, diced.

Zest of one lime

cayenne and jalapeno pepper to taste.

Mix all ingredients, chill.

Autumn:

In our part of the country, the Autumnal Equinox is the apple harvest, so our recipes are packed full of apples:

Home brewed Apple Sauce:

8 apples, peeled, pared and diced.

1 cup water

1/3 cup REAL maple syrup, and if you use "pancake syrup" this will taste just awful, so don't blame me.

1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 teaspoon ground cloves

Combine all ingredients in saucepan and heat slowly, mixing until sauce texture. Serve

warm, preferably over a good French vanilla frozen yogurt. (RBST free, of course!)

Mulled Cider:

Combine in a cheese cloth Cinnamon sticks, pieces of vanilla bean, cloves and allspice so that the mixture equals about 1/4 cup per gallon of cider. (go easy on the cloves.) Tie off the cheese cloth and toss into a pot full of cider, heat to just boiling, then let sit several minutes. Serve warm

Yule:

We narrowed this down to three recipes, but Yule recipes are numerous. I must thank Lady Martia of Bell Coven for the first recipe and enough frozen cranberries to make about fifty loaves!

Bell Coven Bog Bread

1 1/2 cups cranberries

1 cup sugar

1/4 cup vegetable oil

1/4 cup almond "milk"

1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

4 egg whites (add a pinch of food coloring for "yellow" bread)

1 1/2 cups whole wheat/white flour mixture

1 tsp. baking soda

1/2 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. cinnamon

dash ground clove

3/4 cup chopped walnuts

Combine ingredients; pour into greased and floured loaf pan. Bake one hour in a 350° oven. Serve warm with butter.

Currant Teacakes:

1 cup butter, not margarine.

1/2 cup confectioners powdered sugar

2 teaspoons vanilla

2 1/2 cups flour

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

1/2 cup dried currants

dash salt

dash cinnamon(optional)

Topping: Confectioner's sugar with dash of green and red crystal sugar.

Mix butter, 1/2 cup confectioner's sugar, vanilla salt cinnamon and currants.. Slowly add flour and nuts until dough can be formed into balls. Place on the back of a cookie sheet, on top of parchment paper, if possible. Bake 10 minutes on until firm but not browned in a 400° oven. Roll while hot in sugar topping.

Gingerbread:

(This is the cookie type of Gingerbread, not the soft kind.)

1/3 cup brown sugar

2 tbs. honey

1/4 cup shortening

3/4 cup dark molasses

1/4 cup water

1 teaspoon vanilla

2 cups whole wheat flour or 1 cup whole wheat and 1 cup rye or buck-wheat.

1 1/2 cups white flour

1 teaspoon baking soda

2 teaspoons ginger

dash salt

1 teaspoon each: Allspice, Cloves, Cinnamon, ground.

Mix sugar, shortening, honey, molasses, vanilla and water. Add other ingredients, using hands to mix them (this is really sticky stuff) scrape off hands, cover, refrigerate for at least one hour, better if left overnight. Roll dough 1/4 inch thick and cut into shapes, place on greased cookie sheet for 10-18 minutes (depends on whether you want them HARD or kind of soft) in an oven heated to 350° Decorate.

The Four Major Sabbats:

Beltane:

Flower cake:

Take a regular white double layer cake, frost with white frosting. Use a paintbrush to

Spread reconstituted egg white or thinned honey on edible flowers and leaves, and small berries, dip in superfine granulated sugar. Use the leaves, flowers and berries to create a pentacle on top of the cake, put a votive candle in the center.

Athena Bread:

6 cups flour: Unbleached (I use 1/4 whole wheat to 1/2 unbleached white to 1/4 buckwheat or oat-ANY works, but more than 1/2 "heavy" flour will make this bread tough)

1 tbsp salt

3 tbsp Olive Oil

1/2 cup finely minced Black, Green and Red Mediterranean Olives

1 cup canned ripe olives, minced (save the water)

2 teaspoons minced garlic.

2 packages yeast

1 1/2 cups water

2 tbsp honey

cornmeal

Combine 3 cups flour, salt, oil, garlic, olives. In a measuring cup, add enough water to the olive "juice" to equal 3/4 cup. Add 1 1/2 cups hot water to this. Add honey. Add yeast. Beat lightly, let sit for 1 minute. It should be foamy. If it's NOT, you need to try again. (Water shouldn't be more than 130° F, and the yeast shouldn't be over 1 year old)

Add the Foamy yeast mixture to the dry stuff and mix well.

Add the rest of the flour slowly. If dough is too sticky to handle, add up to 1 1/2 cups more flour.

Knead on a floured surface for about 10 minutes. Form into a sort of flattened ball. Grease a bowl, place the ball of dough into the bowl, and turn so that the top of the dough is lightly greased. Let rise for one hour in a warm place.

Punch down dough. Form gently into TWO balls and flatten lightly. Cover a LARGE baking sheet in a thin layer of cornmeal. Place the loaves a least 4 inches apart.

Using a very sharp knife, slit the tops of the bread 3-4 times, making a asterix-like pattern. (The slits should only go in a few millimeters, and go across the top 1/3 of the bread, in the center)

Let rise 40 minutes, or until twice the size they were before. If it looks like they will touch, gently separate them.

Bake in a 425 degree oven for about 30 minutes. When done, they will sound hollow if you tap them.

LET COOL COMPLETELY before cutting for an even texture.

Beltane Punch:

2 tablespoons honey dissolved in 1/2 cup hot water, cooled

1/2 cup lemon juice

1 quart orange juice

1 liter sparkling water.

1 liter lemon-lime soda

Combine, serve cold with frozen strawberries in the mixture.

Beltane is best celebrated with fresh fruits and vegetables, for which no recipes are needed.

Lughnasa:

Golden Grain bread

1 cup white flour

1 tablespoon honey

dash salt

1/4 teaspoon baking soda

1 package yeast

1 1/2 cup very warm water

1 cup wheat flour

1/2 cup rye or buckwheat flour

3/4 cup wheat germ, (preferably a honey roasted variety)

1/2 cup Irish oatmeal (or regular old fashioned oatmeal.)

1 tablespoon corn meal

Dissolve honey into hot water. Add yeast, mix rapidly. Add flour, salt, baking soda. Beat with a solid beater or wooden spoon until completely combined. Combine all other ingredients until you have a thick batter. If too sticky, add more flour. Beat well, then divide into two loaves. Place in greased loaf pans, sprinkle top with a little cornmeal, wheat germ and oatmeal. Let rise for one half hour. Bake in a 400° oven for 25 minutes or until golden. Remove from pan while hot.

Corn bread

This is a Yankee journey bread, supposedly based on a recipe from a friend's Bostonian ancestress, wife of an importer. The cayenne is my addition; to "fix" the lesser quality paprika we receive up north, which is more color than flavor.

2 cups cornmeal

2 tablespoons paprika

1 teaspoon parsley

1 tablespoon finely minced onion

1/2 cup finely shredded carrot

1/4 teaspoon shredded cheese

1 cup cut corn

1/4 cup flour

Dash cayenne

1/4 cup margarine or butter

2 cups plain yogurt, sour milk or buttermilk

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 teaspoon honey

dash salt

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

2 eggs

Grease an oven-safe skillet (or an 8X8X2 square) mix all ingredients very well, pour into skillet, bake 25 minutes or until well browned (a little longer in a square pan.) at 450°

Samhain:

Samhain punch:

1 quart each dandelion or grapefruit wine and dry red wine (or 2 quarts dry red.)

1 12oz. concentrated orange juice, thawed.

1 1/2 cup lemon juice.

Chopped citrus fruit, strawberries and cherries

Combine all ingredients, let sit 1/2 hour., serve with ice (dry ice for a "spooky" punch.) Try a mixture of cranberry and grapefruit juice for a non-alcoholic variation. This punch is the exact color of autumn leaves, and the ancestors like it. As Tamryn says (when it comes out right) Even your dead great grandmother will like this punch!

Jack O'Lantern bread

You know that stringy pumpkin stuff? The inner gunk you remove when you are making a jack o lantern? The stuff your mother always said was useless? Well, prove her wrong!

To prepare pumpkin "hair":

Remove seeds, combine in a large sauce pan all the pumpkin goo, extra pieces of pumpkin meat, an equal amount of water, and three tablespoons maple syrup (add nutmeg, if desired)

Heat to a boil, then simmer for one hour or until no water remains.

Drain into a cheese cloth or small holed colander, but don't squeeze.

Measure out three cups of the stuff. Freeze the rest. To this, combine:

1 1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 tablespoon vanilla

4 eggs

2 cups flour

1 cup wheat flour

2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1/2 teaspoon Allspice
1/2 teaspoon Nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
Dash salt

Combine all ingredients, add flours last. Pour into 2 greased loaf pans. Bake one hour in a 350° oven, place pans into refrigerator for five minutes, then remove loaves from pans and let cool.

Pumpkin seed

In a large rectangular baking dish dissolve 1 tablespoon salt into 1 cup water. Add enough pumpkin seeds to just cover bottom of pan. Allow to sit in a 250° oven for 1 hour, or until all water is gone, turn oven up to 400° roast 5 minutes, shake, roast a few minutes more. Rub roasted seed with paper towels to catch extra salt.

Imbolc:

Imbolc is the meager feast, the time when stores are at their lowest. Many of these ingredients are often "lying around."

Oatmeal cookies

1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
dash salt
1 egg
1 1/2 cups oatmeal
1 cup flour

1 cup raisins or chocolate chips. (or chocolate covered raisins)

Combine all ingredients and drop teaspoonfuls onto lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes or until firmish and golden. Allow to sit at least one half hour on a wax-paper covered countertop.

Mart's Variation:

Substitute 1/2 cup white sugar and 1/2 cup brown sugar for the brown sugar, add 1/4 teaspoon ginger and 1/2 cup each dried, sweetened cranberries and blueberries instead of raisins.

Snow cakes

1 White Cake mix, prepared

1 white frosting

1 package shredded coconut

1 small package slivered almonds

Prepare white cupcakes as directed by mix, adding 1/2 cup coconut to the mix. Frost, dip frosted tops in bowl of shredded coconut top cupcakes with small bits of almonds. A variation on this uses White "chocolate" with almonds, finely grated, instead of coconut.

Circle of light cake:

Prepare any ring cake as directed on package, place thirteen candles along the cake (tapers, not birthday candles) light before serving.

Lunar recipes:

Any recipe can be a lunar recipe, just make it round. The following are two citrusy favorites for Moon Ceremonies.

Logan's Lunar Lemon Cookies:

3 cups powdered sugar

2 cups unsalted butter

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 1/2 teaspoon lemon extract

2 eggs

4 cups flour

2 teaspoons cream of tartar

Cut with moon cookie cutters. Mix and bake at 375°, for 8 minutes, until light brown. Once cool, glaze with the following:

2/3 cup butter

4 cups powdered sugar

1/2 teaspoon vanilla

1 tablespoon lemon extract.

zest of one lemon

lemon juice

Heat butter in a sauce pan until melted, slowly add sugar, vanilla, lemon extract and the zest of one lemon. Add lemon juice in tablespoons until a thick soupy consistency. Drizzle on top of cookies.

Pentacle variation: Cut cookies into circles Add less lemon juice, creating a soupy "frosting" frost cookies, then draw pentacles with another color (I like blue) of commercial decorating frosting.

Lunar Lemon/limeade:

2 quarts cold water

3/4 cup sugar

2 cups lemon or lime juice (or a combination of both)

Dissolve sugar in juice, combine with water, stir well.

Incense

I make no claims to be an expert on incense, oils, and the like. Nearly all of the information here appears as I would use it from my own Grimoires. I've tried to be concise, but the creation of and the various purposes of incense requires in depth reading. Rarely do I feel compelled to tell a student "no, go read about this somewhere else," but, well, go. The following table lists some basic fragrances and their uses. The forms used are up to you. For information, I heartily suggest *The Complete Book of Incense, Oils & Brews*, by Scott Cunningham (Llewellyn Publications, 1989) and any books, Wiccan/Pagan or not, on aromatherapy.

Acacia: Attunement, Motherhood. The Goddesses Hera, Leto, Wolf deities.

Acorn: (Ground acorns make a musky addition to any incense) Fertility, Male Deity, Masculinity, Power, The Gods Jupiter, Zeus and Odin.

Allspice: Cleansing, The Element of Fire, Health, Warmth, An end to fear, Power.

Amber (Warm): Attunement, The Consecration of Tools, The Element of Earth, Exorcism, Healing. (My favorite amber is the Labdanum Resin from *Cistus ladaniferous*) Hindu Gods, Gods affiliated with Forests.

Amber, Fragrant (or "Sweet"): Authority, Gods, Meditation, Protection. Gods of Love, Erotic pursuits and ecstasy.

Apple (blossom): Fertility, Prevention of Homesickness, Spring. The Goddess Persephone and similar springtime deities.

Apple (fruit): The Cycle of Life, Happiness, Marriage. The Goddesses Hera, Aphrodite and Eris, as well as the Apple Mother figure herself, a syncretic Earth mother figure.

Bayberry: Birth, Cleansing, Initiation, Yule. The Gods of Winter.

Bay (laurel): Achievement, Consecration, Divination, Exorcism, Priest(esse)s, Male Deity, the God Apollo.

Bergamot: Attunement, Holiness.

Blackberry: Creativity, Tenacity, Wildness, Pan.

Blueberry: Goddesses, Harvests, Protection of crops, Survival in bad weather.

Catmint/Catnip: Creativity, Gymnastic/acrobatic ability, Inner Harmony, Luck, Playfulness, Power, Visions. Any cat deities.

Cedar: Attunement, Ceremonial States, Cleansing, Consecration of Tools, Healing, Purification, Purity, Strength. Gods of Forests and the sea.

Chamomile: Centering, Luck, Peace. Gods affiliated with its calming abilities, such as Pax.

Cinnamon: Centering, Divination, Element of Fire, Healing, Oneness, Warmth. Bird and Eagle Gods, Forge Gods.

Clove: Element of Earth, Healing, An end to Pain, Openness, Preservation, Warmth, Wisdom. Underworld Gods and gods of gentle death.

Cypress: Banishing, Consecration of tools, Oaths, Out of Body experiences. Gods of the Sea.

Damiana: Aphrodisiac, Love. Love and Erotic deities.

Frankincense: Ancestral memory, Divination, Holiness, Initiation, Protection, Riches. Any deity.

Floral, Any: Element of Air, Fertility, Goddesses (esp. Floralia), New beginnings.

Gardenia: Aphrodisiac, Beauty, Love, Marriage, Perfect Trust. Any Goddesses.

Ginger: Anointing, Element of Fire, Energy, Healing, Holiness, Warmth. Any oriental deities, the expense of quality imported ginger makes it a good votive sacrifice.

Ginseng: Aphrodisiac, Creativity, Element of Earth, Thought, Warmth, use as you would ginger or Damina.

Honeysuckle: Creativity, Element of Air, Love, Peace, Tranquillity, Wildness. Any "untamed" female deity.

Jasmine: Anointing, The Element of Water, Fertility, Goddesses, Inspiration, The Night, The Moon, Poetry. The Goddesses Nyx and Persephone.

Lavender: Attunement, Cleansing, Healing, Health, Luck, Lust. Any hearth or purity Goddesses, from Vesta through Athena.

Lemon: Appetite, Cleansing, The Element of Fire, Health. Another good virgin goddess offering.

Lily of The Valley: The Goddess Nemesis, The Fey, Purity, Virginity, Wisdom. It's toxicity is a good reminder that sweetness can hide danger.

Lotus: The Element of Water, Energy, Holiness, Inner Harmony, Inner Peace, Visions, Wisdom. Many Indus valley and Oriental Gods.

Mace: see Nutmeg.

Marigold: Fertility, Health, Sun, Warmth. Gods of protection of the garden.

Melissa (Lemon Balm): Healing, Element of Water, Fertility, Goddesses, Purity of thought. Gods of tranquility and enlightenment.

Musk: The Gods, Lust, Male fertility, Strength, The Warrior. Any male deity.

Myrrh: Cleansing, The Element of Earth, Holiness. Any deity.

Nutmeg: Luck, Soothing, Strength, Winter. Winter deities, Love deities.

Orange, Blossom: Goddesses, Rebirth, Spring. An untraditional scent.

Orange, Fruit: Cleansing, Heartiness, Summer. Orange is associated with gods of purity, health and money.

Patchouli: Holiness, Inner Peace, The Gods, Strength. Good as a second scent.

Peach: Gentleness, Fruition, Love, Soothing, Summer. Peach is an excellent fruit for winemaking, and be used in rituals dedicated to wine gods.

Peppermint: Anointing, Cleansing, The Gods, Strength. I think it is impossible for many of us to associate peppermint with anything but candy canes, however, and don't recommend it for any deity.

Pine: Cleansing, Consecration of Tools, Defense, Harvest, Heartiness, Winter. Deities of Forests and the seas.

Pine, White: Attunement, Ceremonial States, Element of Air, Element of Earth, Exorcism, Tenacity. The Gods as a whole.

Raspberry: Fertility, Health, Soothing, Sustenance. Good for any wild or fruit gods.

Rose, Red: Anointing, Element of Water, Fertility, Harvest, Health, Love, Magick, Romance. Goddess associated with love and riches.

Rose, Yellow: Anointing, Element of Water, The Goddesses, To Turn jealousy, Lust. You can think of yellow rose scent as a stronger version of red roses. If red roses bring, for example, good health, yellow brings great health.

Sage: Ancestral Memory, Attunement, Ceremonial States, Cleansing, Consecration of tools, Exorcism, Healing, The Inner Elder, Purity, Magick, Meditation, Wisdom. Any Gods or Spirits of the Americas or healing.

Saffron: Ancestral Memory, Dreams, Sacrifices, Warmth. Used as a votive offering, as with ginger.

Sandalwood: Attunement, Autumn, Ceremonial States, Cleansing, Control, Element of Air, Exorcism, The Gods, Shielding, Protection. A very good "basic" scent, not dedicated to any particular deity.

Spearmint: Anointing, Cleansing, The Goddesses, Meditation.

Strawberry: The Goddesses, Harvest, Summer, Sustenance, Youth. Another good scent for "wild" gods.

Vanilla: Attunement, Element of Earth, Fertility, The Goddesses, Healing. Another good basic scent that is not really affiliated with any one god.

Violet: Anointing, Growth, Nobility, Purity. Any Flower or spring gods.

Wisteria: Grace, The Inner Child(feminine), Maidenhood, Purity.

Magickal/Craft Names.

Reborn into a new life, many of us choose a new name, shucking the layers of emotion attached to our “old” name. For many, the craft name is a double identity, a name to go by when sneaking around, anonymous to the world. For others, the adoption of a craft name, or perhaps the adoption into a clan, or coven involves the legal change of their name. Both have their ups and downs. I’ve always suggested at least five years of “trial” before making your name permanent. This is tree time, the amount of time it takes for the ground to fully accept a newly planted tree. Think of your name like a tree. Does it prosper, root? Is it so difficult to pronounce that you need to change it?

Does it need shortening because mispronunciation is driving you nuts?

My own craft name, Kaatryn is a variation of both Catherine and Kaaterinya, an old form of Katerina. Years later, instead of explanation, I usually tell people “just call me Kat,” because Kaatryn (Kah-trin) is automatically mispronounced. Silvercat, reflective of the invisible lynx that follows me (no, really, ask my friends, it steals car keys and anything else I’ve just picked up), was an older craft name, and “Kat” has been a compromise. Before changing my name, I tended to go to extreme lengths to not use my secular name. Holding by the tree time rule is difficult, but until my time was up, I refused to legally change my name.

Changing a name is particularly difficult on children. Do you change a child’s name? My own son is constantly called by his middle name, and I remember being the only one in my family with my father’s last name and hating it. (I was a little matriarchal as a kid.) For

years, I was going to change my name to my mother's or my great-grandparents, but I always felt that I wasn't "really" a Campbell, and the last thing we need in Wicca is another Morgan. MacMorgan is a compromise, a Scottish-Cornish hybrid that sounds traditional. At our tenth anniversary handfasting, my lover and our son will probably change their last names, but for now, it is their tree time.

Variations on names are ethnic and especially effective when paying homage to a god (dess.) A person may chose Ap Diana, MacDiana, McDiana, O'Diana, Dianella, Dianan, De Diana, De La Diana, Dianal, or Anaid instead of Diana, or alter the spelling Dyana, or the pronunciation, Deeana. Personalization is especially effective in reducing repetitiveness. No longer can we just be Phoenix or Diana, a profusion of new Pagans with the same names has created a need for secondary names and titles, much as population growth created that need hundreds of years ago. A return to profession names is common. A lawyer friend of mine goes by "Marilia Barrister," a carpenter I know has legally changed his last name to Woodwright. Professional last names, as well as matrilineal names and altered God/Goddess names are common to the Pagan community, but weigh all factors before choosing...do you like it? Is it too common? Does it feel right? Maybe using a numerological or runic approach could help...explore! Create!

Perhaps the most important factor of your new name, second only to your feelings about it, is how it really sounds. In retrospect, I never could've been "Silvercat" and taken myself seriously, the name has more of Marvel comics than Magick about it. One friend likes to put names through the "Doctor-Lawyer test." The Doctor-Lawyer test is just what it seems to be. Imagine you are ill and in need of an operation...would you want a doctor named "Goodrabbit Pinkiewitch" to work on you? How about "Golden Eaglefox?" "Lady Gwenbottom Figittiger?" Likewise, if you were sued, and needed to be defended, would you want "Fluffy Whistlestar" to help you? Try to see the name is really yours. There is nothing more humiliating than a name that unexpectedly evokes laughter.

Likewise, while many pagans use what are seen by many as Native American names, swiping a name from the real thing because you think it's cool is a really degrading way to identify yourself. Like those television-friendly Native American names, these pagan names are often translations from other languages, with very real meanings, and you should know what they mean before you use them. I cannot stress enough the need to know what you are. I don't know about you, but I would probably find it hard to contain my laughter at a blond haired blue-eyed guy named Spottedpony or a gentle quiet woman named Dionysus LaughingGull. Let moderation guide you.

Dedications and Initiations

Perhaps one of the biggest disputes in Wicca, as well as one of the things new Wiccans worry about the most, is the value of a dedication over an initiation. A dedication is an often self-performed ritual that solidifies ones position as a Wiccan by announcing that that faith is held to the gods and to oneself. An initiation, on the other hand, is a ceremony by which one is inducted into a tradition or group. Some traditions allow what are called "self-initiations" but such things usually miss the point of an initiation entirely. Many liberal, open, traditions which would be seen by few as rigid or traditionalist reject the idea of a self-initiation.

This is not a case of traditional superiority. An initiation is a process that changes the emotional state of a person entirely, and whether or not it can be performed alone is a genuine concern. In my opinion, self-initiations miss the entire point of the process. An initiation is all about addition to a group. Dedications, on the other hand, affirm your position as a member of your faith. A member of a coven or a large tradition group is well served by having both an initiation and a dedication. A solitary practitioner has no need for an initiation.

Who can, and who cannot, initiate another person is another dispute in the Wiccan community. Some teach that "only a Witch can make a Witch," or that initiations must be performed by a person who was initiated by someone who was initiated all the way back to Gerald Gardner or some other founder, real or mythical. UEW teaches that a person who is self-dedicated who creates a coven is capable of initiating members into that coven. We have no strict initiation into the tradition, preferring that people dedicate themselves, and as a result of

that, many solitary UEW members have never been initiated, so it is often the case that people performing an initiation have not been initiated themselves. We solve this problem with reciprocal and visiting initiations.

Visiting initiations are just what they seem, initiation by a priest or priestess who is visiting, or initiation into a tradition by visiting another coven or community. They have their good and bad points. On one side, few priests are willing to initiate people who they have not invested time in, and few people are going to want to be initiated by priests they don't know (this can be completely different, for example, in online Wiccan communities, where a priest may be known for years without being met offline). Yet, expertise has its advantages. An initiation is, essentially, an enactment of a mystery rite, and if the person holding the reigns of the rite has experience with it, there is an undeniable advantage for all parties.

When going from solitary to coven, or limited in your trust or contact with other practitioners, reciprocal initiations are best. They are just what the name implies; one person in a group initiates another person, then, at a later date that person is initiated (initiations should be done one at a time or in pairs). As with all just things, these are deeply personal decisions, it takes a certain type of person to perform a rite they've only seen others do, or worse, only read about.

All of this begs the question of what an initiation entails. An initiation is, as I have stated, an induction into a coven or tradition performed by members of that tradition, but that is just the simplest explanation. Initiations are based in the concept of Wicca as a mystery faith, a religion by which one enacts a rite, or a series of rites, to achieve an end, usually the proper afterlife or "oneness" with the divine. Mystery faiths abound around the world and throughout history, from the Ancient rites of Eleusis to the modern Baptisms of the sects of Christianity, so that Wicca is practiced by some as a mystery religion is no surprise.

The Wiccan rite of initiation, regardless of the claims of many early authors, is undoubtedly firmly based on Indo-European, and most

specifically, Greek and Roman, mythology. The rite is an enactment of the heroic journey, the descent into the underworld, the change by what you see there, and the return to the real world. In mythology, this descent is often (but not always) literal; Odysseus, Aeneas and Heracles travel to the underworld and are changed by what they see there. In an initiation, the descent is purely figurative.

As in these myths, the initiation consists of three sections, the descent (or *katabasis*), the revelation, and the rebirth into a new life. How this initiation is performed can vary wildly, but these three points are always present. To explain how these three things are used in different ways, I'm going to describe three vastly different initiation rituals that really happened. The names, locations, and exact words have been changed out of respect for the people who led these initiations, but they all happened. These three initiations can easily be adapted or interpreted into a new initiation without much work. Initiation is one of those sticky subjects that are always better taught by example than discussion.

Forest: A Labyrinth initiation

Forest was a latecomer to Wicca, at 45, the oldest person his coven had ever initiated. He was in good health, but a smoker, and as part of his initiation, he decided to give up smoking. Cigarettes, he decided, were not compatible with his new life. The month before his initiation, he quit cold turkey, spending his mornings walking along the country road near his house, picking up the cigarette butts he saw along the way. One half-mile from his house, the forest was blackened from a fire last fall, started by cigarette butts just like these. The litter, which he was disgusted by, and the desecration of the forest he felt was (in-part) his, helped him through the nicotine cravings. He saw his life as heading down a black tunnel at this point, and the forthcoming initiation was a light at the end of the tunnel.

On the night of the new moon, three friends dressed in black arrived at his door. Forest was given a plain white robe and sandals, and told to change. Once he had changed, he was blindfolded, and led

to a car. In the back seat, his priest sat beside him, and held his hand. His priest asked him several questions: "Are you sure you want to become a member of our group? Do you have doubt in your heart about your faith? Are there any questions you have left?" The questions came rapidly, leaving Forest no time to calculate the direction he was going. He'd been meeting with these people for over a year, however, and felt perfectly safe. In a car behind him, he heard the noisy muffler of his wife's own car. If anything went wrong, she would take him home, which had been arranged from the beginning.

After about twenty minutes, the cars stopped. He smelled freshly cut corn and distant cattle. Although they'd blindfolded him, the time and smells told him he was in his own priest's cornfield. All of his friends hugged him, while he was still blindfolded. He felt off-kilter on the damp ground in the soft sandals, but their arms led him down a slope and into the corn. They stood around him in a circle and prayed, his priest stood before him and spoke.

"Nathan Stanford, son of John and Maureen, husband of Elizabeth who is known to us as Sylva, Father to Bryan, Melissa and Moira who is known to us as Acorn, you have come before us this day to claim your place as one of the Wicca, and join our tribe in the worship of the gods who cannot be named. Do you come to this sacred place with an open heart, of your own free will?"

"I come here of my own free will, with an open heart," he answered.

"In the time before time, mankind was lost in darkness," the priest announced, "the tools of knowledge, ingenuity and friendship saved him, and he came into the light. Tonight, Nathan, you shall be tested, and that test will mark you as one of our kind. Take the hand of this woman"-a silk gloved, small hand was placed in his-"she will lead you to the place of beginnings. There, you will lose your name and your way. When we speak again, you shall be one of us."

His friends embraced him again, and bestowed blessings and good wishes on him. Then, the woman in the gloves pulled his hand and led him forward into the moist soil of the cornfield. They walked for nearly an hour, and every few minutes she spun him, until he was

dizzy and confused. After a while, she stopped, and pressed him to his knees. She spoke in a whisper, making it impossible to tell exactly who of his friends she was, and deliberately affected an accent to hide any familiar cadence. "He who was known as Nathan," she spoke, "I take your name from you. You may come to me and reclaim it at anytime, and be gone from this place with no claims on you, or you may go forward and join your people." She removed the blindfold. "In place of your name I give you three words, and these three words will be your guide if you let them. The words are 'Will, Love and Self,' a man needs nothing more to rule the world, and nothing less to rule himself. This is the one truth I share with you tonight, and you will win others. Now rise."

She was clad in solid black, with a heavy veil covering her face, she pointed with her gloved hand to a space behind him. The corn was cut in irregular lines, and a line of white string ran along the corn, to either side, marking a path that began behind him. "That is the way of the labyrinth. It is a twisting, turning path that will lead you to your people. Behind me is a straight path that leads to the road. It is marked with a gold string. At anytime, you can return here and I will remove you from this place. Are you ready?"

He nodded. She asked him, as the priest had, if he did this of his own free will and with an open heart. He replied in the affirmative and she gestured for him to begin his journey down the path. As he began, she lit a high torch and waved it in the air. "Should you wish to quit," she said, "break the white string and walk through the corn to this torch."

He nodded again, and set out along the path. Above him, clouds were beginning to gather. He knew, from the color of those clouds, that he would not escape a drenching this night. After about ten minutes of walking, including several dead ends that turned him around, he came into a clearing that had a lit yellow candle on a small folding table. His oldest daughter, in a white robe, stood behind the table. "Blessed be your feet, my father, that have brought you to this place. You stand to the far east of the labyrinth. The place of beginnings, of

the sunrise, and of the air. Please be still." She circled around him, saying a small prayer and swinging a censer of deep, earthy incense. "As you are my beginning, so shall I be yours. Behind me lies another path to the road. You may turn back now and regain your name or go forward and be born anew. Shall you continue, or retreat?"

"I will continue."

"Then take this gift from me," she said, and placed a golden chain with a small pentacle pendant around his neck, "And take also the blessings of the air," she kissed him on the forehead, and took his hand and led him to a yellow string, which was tied before him and marked out another path. "If you will go forward, untie this string and continue. The white path will disappear behind you. If you take this path you cannot turn back but to head for the torch. Do you understand?" He nodded and untied the string. After the first turn down the new path, he looked back to see his daughter carefully taking up the white string, then he continued down the yellow path. Again, he wandered through many twists and turns, and a few dead ends, before coming to a similar clearing with a folding table and a red candle. Starstaff, a member of his coven who served as his spokesman (the person who promises to take care of the neophyte and is responsible for that neophyte's behavior) stood behind the table. He drew an Athamé, and told Forest to kneel.

He stood before him with the Athamé drawn and pointed at Forest's heart with it. "This is an Athamé, it can be used as a weapon, or it can be used to bring people together." He turned it in his hand, and said a prayer before offering the hilt to his friend. "May the gift of this Athamé sever any ties of discontent between us, and sever you from the you that you were before." He placed a small scabbard with a strap over Forest's shoulder. "Sheathe your Athamé and embrace me as your brother and you will pass with the blessings of fire. If you would leave, there is a path behind me that will lead you to a road and your old name. Do you wish to leave now?"

"No."

He lead him to another tied string, this one red. "Unbind this string with the blessings of south and of fire and go forward toward your new name." He hugged his friend and smiled and he untied the string and marched forward. A soft rain began to fall. After another series of twists, turns, and dead ends he came to another clearing. His wife stood behind a similar table and a blue candle. She looked up at the rain, and laughed, and said "truly, the blessings of water are upon you!" She embraced him, and drew a star on his forehead with an oiled finger. "Accept this blessing, father of my children, and move forward to a new name or take the path behind, which leads to the road. Will you continue forward?"

"Yup!"

She hugged him again, and walked with him toward a tied blue string. She held up an old-fashioned canteen, and opened it. "Sip of this wine with me before you continue." She took a sip, then he did, then he poured some into the earth, and she strapped the canteen over his shoulder. "Take this gift that you may never thirst."

He continued through the string, and another set of dead ends and confusing turns, until he reached another clearing, the rain now falling steadily. His priest stood there, with another table and a green candle which he shielded from the rain with a hand. "You have passed and received the blessings of air, fire, and water, and here I stand to present you the blessings of the earth, and lead you to your new name. He-who-was-Nathan, do you wish to continue?"

"I do."

"Then take this gift from me," he said, handing him a loaf of brown bread. "And do with it as you want."

He tore open the brown bread and handed a hunk to his priest, and cast a piece on the ground. "I share this gift with you and the gods, as I share the world with my people and my gods. I thank you for this blessing, and desire to go forward-I see the path behind you, and I refuse it."

The Priest nodded. "You have passed this test, and I will lead you forward, if that is your will."

"It is."

The priest took his hand and led him along a path between uncut rows of corn. Above, thunder began to crash, and the rain fell very hard. He struggled to remain standing in the wet soil as he was pulled along. He crashed through the edge of the field, and someone turned on a huge light, temporarily blinding him. His friends and family embraced him, and his priestess, previously missing, draped a sash over his shoulder. "Blessings be upon you Forest and welcome to our circle, within this circle you also will be called Autumn, which is your secret name among our circle, and is not to be shared with outsiders."

Forest then was led into a warm car, towed off and driven to his priest's house, where they threw him a huge party, giving him presents and feasting. At the end of the night, they performed their first circle with him as a full member of their coven.

Stephanie: A Binding Initiation:

Stephanie, 22, had come into Wicca from a fundamentalist sect of Christianity. She described her former religion as a burden that she still felt she carried. Estranged from her parents since the age of 16, when she realized she was bisexual, Stephanie felt as though she had no family. She had joined the group she was about to be initiated into two years prior to the ceremony, but still felt that the religion of her childhood was holding her back. Like most Wiccan groups, hers did not rebuke Christ or condemn Christianity, and as Stephanie worked through her issues with her former faith, she wavered between practicing Wicca and practicing a sort of Wicca Flavored Ex-Christianity, where her dedication to the god and goddess was more about shocking people than what her heart felt.

Her priestess was very smart in not initiating her immediately. Until Stephanie made peace with her former faith, she ran the risk of boomeranging back to it as soon as she found something to redeem it. If the Wicca she was practicing was allowed to be tainted by her strong anti-Christian bias, and she then returned to Christianity, she could paint all Wiccans as anti-Christian. By waiting, and helping Stephanie

overcome her anger and fears, the priestess prevented another dabbler from having the possibility of becoming a liability to the greater Wiccan community.

As the first stage of her initiation, her priestess, with the help of a liberal Christian minister, performed an exit interview. The priestess and the minister met with her at a neutral location, and they discussed her issues with Christianity. Her bisexuality was divorced from her reasons for leaving Christianity by the presence of a minister whose congregation was "open and affirming." The minister helped to alleviate the girl's fears about her parents. They were bad, she decided, because they were not very nice people, not because of their religion. Christianity ceased to be her reason to be Wiccan and became a non-issue for her. With the priestess' permission, the minister gently tried to explain Christianity in terms the girl did not have issues with. Eventually, she decided that the concepts of salvation and sin were too foreign to her experiences with the divine to make Christianity an option. She felt ready to join the Wiccan group as a Wiccan, instead of as an ex-Christian.

The second stage of her initiation consisted of a research project regarding the various traditions of Wicca. She used the net and the coven's collection of books to determine whether or not she wanted to join the group. She compared the coven's suggested books with those she enjoyed, and researched why the coven was so very against one writer she enjoyed. Her priestess arranged for her to meet with a coven of another tradition and compare it, and to speak with some former members of the group who had left for others. It was explained to her that membership in this coven required community service, and a large selection of work, as well as a dedication to the group's stated purposes. Stephanie turned the project into a letter to the coven that explained why she wanted to join and her dedication to the group.

On her 22nd birthday, Stephanie passed on the typical birthday party and drinking fest, and instead attended a fairly solemn ceremony at her priestess' house. Of the 20 people she'd been performing

rituals with, only 8, the initiated long-term members, were allowed to attend the rite itself. The ceremony began with the casting of the circle around her, as she stood still and quiet contemplating the seriousness of the moment. Once the circle was cast, her priestess stood before her with a ball of fine twine. Her priestess handed her the end of the ball of twine, and began to walk around her with it, binding her in it.

"This twine is all that has hampered you in the past. Your fears, your anger, your hatred."

The Priestess passed the ball to another member. He, too, walked around her, entwining her, "It does no good to ignore these fears, these things that bind you. To do that is to let them control you."

Yet another member took up the ball. "Like this string these things will not go away because you ignore them, and you can strain against them, but together they are too strong to break. It is not the hatred and anger that are too much to handle, it is the collection of them."

A fourth member took up the ball, and wound the last of it around her. Her arms and legs were held immobile against her body. "Stephanie, these bonds are not impossible to break. These knots that I affix to you are not impossible to untie. You needn't be Houdini to get out. In fact, if you strain now, the string will break, but if you strain against them you may be burned by the twine, so I ask that you stay awhile within them, and listen."

The other four members of the group lifted drums from the floor and began a heartbeat rhythm; Stephanie closed her eyes and inhaled the sandalwood scented air deeply.

The priestess read a version of the descent of Persephone into the underworld, and then stood before Stephanie with an Athamé. "This is a symbol of Wicca, it binds us together even as it cuts." She handed the blade to Stephanie.

"The Blade is a tool. Wicca is a tool. You have sought to use that tool to remove the bonds of hatred and anger, so use the tool, and cut the string."

As Stephanie removed the string, the priestess continued, "But when the string is removed, the knife remains. Using the tool to cut the

bonds is a valid use, but it is not enough to keep the tool...Stephanie, why do you seek to join our family?"

"I love my gods. I seek to become closer to them, to better hear their voices."

"That is an admirable reason to follow Wicca, but why as a part of Green Gables Coven?"

"Because this is my family, and I help them, and they help me."

The priestess lifted up the broken strings and threw them into a pot of sticks and herbs for burning in the bonfire after the ritual. "You stand before me unhindered, unbound, free of the anger and hatred that held you before. Joining a coven, and following a tradition is accepting another bond. This arm ring symbolizes that bond. Before I put it on you, I must know that you go forward in this of a free will. Is it your will to join this coven?"

"Yes."

The rules of the coven were then read, Stephanie agreed to each rule as they were read. Most of them were common sense, such as agreeing to not out members of the coven who were in the closet, and some of them, such as the rule that the one holding a gathering was not responsible for providing food, were almost silly, but she agreed to them all. A copy of the rules was provided, and she signed them, as well as adding her name to those of the coven in their collective book of shadows underneath the same rules. Her priestess affixed the armband and embraced her.

"Now, as a full fledged member of our coven, I leave it to you to open the circle."

Stephanie performed the ritual to open the circle, and the nine of them walked downstairs, where the rest of the coven leapt up and threw Stephanie a surprise party.

Flora: A traditional initiation.

35, small boned, blond haired, and blue eyed, Flora was a newcomer to her coven, but she knew it was for her. She had read many books on Wicca, and after finding a link to the homepage of Graystone

Covenstead on a well-known networking site, she knew the group was what she wanted. The group was an eclectic Wiccan group with rituals based in, but not a part of, British Traditional Wicca. Her initiation was performed skyclad. In the first part, her hands were ritualistically bound behind her back, using an intricate knot structure, and a blindfold placed over her eyes. She had been told of these steps, agreed to them, and was prepared for them.

First she was led, by a hand on her shoulder, to the east of the darkened room, let within a previously cast circle by her priestess. She smelled dragon's blood and mace incense (dragon's blood is the spicy scented resin of several plants, mace is the outer hull of nutmeg), and burning pine. A member of her coven passed a willow wand around her, followed by a bundle of burning herbs and incense. "For I am the Guardian of air," the coven member read, "Air that frees the spirit, air that speeds our prayers to heaven, air that surrounds us unseen but felt as the love of the gods, and as that love does, fills us up and gives us life. The air is brought from the path of the east-the place of sunrises and beginnings. Flora, I greet you as the guardian of the air and watcher of the west, and give you the first of your names in this group. You are Flora of the Clan Silverwing, and I greet you as my sister in faith and name. Silverwing clan is dedicated to the protection of Wicca from those who would do it harm. We are the security at public events, and each of us is trained as a medic and press person, and stands at the side of protests and gatherings, ready to help. In your secular life, you are an Emergency Medical Technician, and I understand that this is one of the reasons you've chosen Silverwing, even though you are a very slight woman, and we welcome you even though our clan leader, Marcus, could lift you up with one hand."

The coven member kissed her on the cheeks and forehead, and then she was lead to the south, where more herbs were burning. A warm, but not hot, blade was pressed into her against her heart, not piercing her skin, just a warmth that seemed to spread outward through her body. "For I am the Guardian of fire," said another coven member, "Fire that tempers our inner strength, that purifies our souls, fire that

burns within us like the spark of Zeus stolen by Prometheus, fire we feel in the heat of our blood or the spark that leaps around in our brain. The Fire is the Path of the south, south where the heat comes from, where the heavy pregnant winds bring testing and strife, but brings strength and purity to those that survive them. Flora, I greet you as guardian of the south and keeper of the sacred fire, and give you the second of your names in our group. You are Flora, follower of Hephaestos and Aphrodite, of Clan Silverwing." He placed a necklace around her neck with a miniature hammer and a Venus symbol. "These are the marks of the gods you claim as your own, and I place these symbols upon you in the earnest belief that you will not act in a way that defames them. As a follower of Hephaestos myself, I greet you as my sister and welcome you to stand beside me in the circle."

The coven member kissed her on her head and cheeks, then drew a pentagram on her forehead with cooled ashes from his forge and embraced her. She was then led to the west, where she smelled cool salt water and felt a gentle breeze from the fountain that graced that corner of the room. A goblet of cool water was pressed to her lips and she drank deeply. "For I am the guardian of water," another coven member began, "Water that quenches our thirst, water that is the bulk of our flesh, water that is the source of life itself, from which we all sprang. The water is brought from the path of the west, the path of endings, for though we spring from water, so we return to water. Flora, I greet you as guardian of the west and keeper of the waters, and give you the third of your names in our group. You are Flora, follower of Hephaestos and Aphrodite, of Clan Silverwing, who is known as Elana in our group. You have sipped from the chalice of the waters, may it strengthen you and fill you up. May your waters and our waters be one."

The coven member kissed her on the head and cheeks and then lightly brushed scented oil on her navel and her shoulders, making the three points of a triangle. She was then led to the north, where she smelled fresh earth. Hearty, moist bread was held to her mouth and she ate it. "For I am the guardian of earth," yet another covener began,

"Earth that grounds us, that is the fertile soil in which our ideals take root, Earth which supports us in all things, The path of the Earth comes from the north, the path of the cool winds that bring an end to the sweltering summer and encase us in freezing snow, the winds that can bring comfort or death. Flora, I greet you as guardian of the north and walker on the earth, and give you the last of the names in your group, you are Flora, follower of Hephaestos and Aphrodite, of Clan Silverwing, who is known as Elana of Graystone coven. May you be ever grounded in faith and the brother and sisterhood of your friends."

She was led to the center of the circle. The katabasis story of the coven gods was spoken by the coven bard. It rang in her ears. When she reached the point where the goddess was scourged, a coven member scourged her as well, although it was more of a symbolic scourging than anything else, the device made of soft turned leather. "We suffer that we may learn," said the coven bard. "Know this: The life we have given us is not promised to be free of pain, but just as She grew stronger from her hardship, so will you grow stronger with the trials you suffer in life-the disappointments, the disparities, these are tools you will use to make yourself stronger."

She was then led back to the east. The blindfold was removed, and she stood before the high priestess of the coven, an older woman she'd met only in pre-initiation meetings. "This is our high priestess," said the coven bard, "She speaks now as was done before in the voice of the Goddess, though she, as you, is human." "Hear now the words of the great mother," began the priestess, reciting the charge of the Goddess as written by Doreen Valiente. Flora stood silently and let the words wash over her, struck by the light that seemed to emanate from the face of the priestess, or maybe the moon in the large window behind her. When the priestess was done, she asked Flora to recite the rules of the coven. The priest brought a large book forth, and she signed beside the other names of those who had accepted the coven rules.

Her hands were unbound, and a goblet of wine was pressed to her lips. She accepted the wine with rehearsed words, which seemed to mean more now than before. A robe was brought to her, a soft silvery material with embroidery made by her coven mates, and she put it on as the coven gathered to sing and dance to celebrate her initiation.

Operative and Ritual Witchcraft

Operative and Ritual Witchcraft

Margaret Murray, the much maligned and often scholastically challenged author of *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe*, made a distinction between Ritual Witchcraft and Operative Witchcraft, a distinction often lost on newcomers to Wicca. Operative Witchcraft, which Wicca is **not**, is the practice of spells, chants, curses, charms and the like, with the intention of altering the external universe. Ritual Witchcraft, of which Wicca is but one form, is the practice of prayer, ritual, mass and similar rites with the belief that said rites either bring one closer to the gods, benefit the gods in some way, or otherwise alter the divine/human relationship.

Most groups that fit under the rubric of religion in our internal dictionaries are what Murray would call Ritual Witchcraft, so the use of the term is somewhat nonsensical, and I prefer the generic term "religion," itself. That being said, I hope it is clear that a group that practices "Ritual Witchcraft" is not necessarily a group of Witches. I think few of us would call Catholics or Baptists witches, and some Familial Magickal Traditions are outright opposed to the term preferring Kenner, Pellar, Sorcere, Hexen and hundreds of other terms. This distinction-operative versus ritual-is problematic above and beyond the terminology, because for the religious person, and historically, magick and religion is not easily separated.

So I intend to attempt this distinction in a way that makes it clear to even the least experienced among us, and I humbly beg your forgiveness if I over-clarify.

Perhaps the distinction between operative and ritual witchcraft is easily enough observed in the two most basic of forms, the spell and the prayer. The spell, which is operative witchcraft, may consist, for example, of bathing in an appropriate stream, grinding stones into powder and reciting a complex chant with the purpose of opening a hole in the fabric of space time and moving into a different plane of existence. You can believe, or not, in the results of this activity, but it's a spell regardless. A prayer, on the other hand, may be nothing more than a conversation with god, a song, or a cry out for help to the universe at large.

An example of a spell of a type that no Wiccan would do as a part of their religious practice is this, the "charm of love" from the *Grimoire* of a friend:

"Speak ye not for three and ten hours no sound, no cough. If ye cough, ye must begin again the spell on the next morn. Whilst thou sit silent, draw in chalk upon the floor ten circles twice, in powder that drips from the hand. Then bathe in the water of a stream that moves, and return to the circle, hair unbound. Walk the circle twenty times, ye feet shall alter the circles. Then draw back the power seven times. Within the circle draw the symbol of the ancestors in salt and the symbol of your house in lime. Walk the symbols twice for each time your heart has broken, then stand in the center. Plait thy hair in the sign of mourning, and cover your head with a black veil. When thy time to speak comes, cry the low mourning cry that brings the attention of all to thee-cut thy plait and cry unto the water, "I mourn with no love! Scream to the heavens end this injustice! By the blood of the ****, that runs in my veins, and the knowledge of my gods, my will and my path, I call upon all that is to end my suffering and bring my love to me! I compel thee, powers of All, do my Will this night!"

As you can see, this is not free from religious language, even though it is not a religious action. This is the cause of a lot of confusion as to why magick and religion are not really the same. Magick, defined by the spell above requires knowledge of who you are-a definition of self. We define ourselves by basic principles-our parentage, our culture,

relationships, and our faith. Magick requires, in order to be effective, a statement of who you are and why this matters.

At a moment of utterly weak faith and magick, I once went to a young mage of a Fam-trad I should by all respects despise, and he, perhaps most generously, (though at the time I was furious) took one look at me, and said, "You don't know who you are! You're just moving from significant emotional event to significant emotional event and I won't be a part of it!" and promptly dropped me on my head (metaphorically) and walked out of the room. Recalling the moment brings a blush to my face (I was young and stupid but neither young enough nor stupid enough to use that as an excuse), but serves as a good reminder of the basic principle of magick—"you can't do anything unless you know why. You can't know why unless you know who, and you can't know who unless you alone are responsible for yourself."

Having read *All One Wicca* up to this point, this should sound familiar. Our religion, Wicca, teaches that you alone are responsible for yourself and teaches you to embrace it. Again, magick and religion here intersect-Wicca teaches "know thyself" and in order to do nearly every form of magick you need to know yourself. The logical conundrum begins when you assume that since Wicca teaches "know thyself" and magick requires that you "know yourself" Wicca must be magick or a teaching system for magick.

Christianity, Judaism, Hellenic Reconstructionism and a thousand other faiths, large and small, all teach that knowledge of self is preferable to a lack thereof-and none of them are magick unto themselves. Just because a faith gives you a tool that magick uses does not make magick a faith nor faith a magick. This is especially confusing when you combine this idea with the metaphor of living magickally...If we see everything as magickal and magick in everything, as some religions instruct, it is difficult to separate magick from religion. We make this separation, however, to remove the concept that Wicca is about changing the color of your eyes, or fighting vampires, or whatever Hollywood creates next week.

Let's return to our FMT mage, above, invoking the powers of all to do her bidding. A clue within the spell that it is not a prayer is just that—they do HER bidding. Not that all mages use such terminology, sometimes it is "may my will and thy will be done" or "if it be thy will, let it be so," depending on the level of faith a mage has and the belief in the effects of hubris, a mage can go from demanding it be so to asking politely that the gods allow it to happen. It is considered bad form, however, to take a spell, which is an attempt to work the powers of the universe to your advantage, and attach a spoken modifier to it to make it comply with your religion. Saying "That it harm none" at the end of your spell, as many newbie Wiccan mages do, is considered an affront both in magick and Wicca-in magick because you are limiting the power of magick and in Wicca because it says that you have not researched your action enough to do it.

I cannot say enough that casting a spell is not like using a wish in a role playing game—your words and intent will not be twisted, and no special phrase will make a spell that does harm do good. Mages say of this "harm none disclaimer": "Would you point a gun at a head, say 'an it harm none' and fire, expecting it to magically misfire?" Wiccans are similarly miffed at disclaiming, saying "If I punched you and said 'may my action not harm you' would it make me not responsible if you were hurt?"

Our FMT declares why her spell should work, with no disclaimers—it is the blood of her family, a well known Welsh clan here omitted in compliance with her wishes, her knowledge, her will and her gods—she knows the complete effects of her spell, she does not say how it should not work, because she knows how it should work. Her religion is only brought up because it is part of her identity, and it is the power of her identity that compels the "powers of All" to do her bidding.

Identity is important to Operative Witchcraft. A "Witch-doctor" might begin his activities by saying "I am So and So, son of so and so, of the clan such and such, dedicant of Blah, God of Whatever, known to mankind as Fred, known to the Gods as Joe," or whatever his clan or tradition requires. In ritual witchcraft, the identity of self is pushed

away. We know who we are because our faith says we should but within the ritual circle, we push away from our identity in pure prayer, moving from the self-based realm of Operative Witchcraft and into a more self-less, humble sublimation of self before the gods.

Just as the level of compulsion varies in the operative circle, with some mages declaring "do it because I said so" and others declaring "Do it if it is okay with the gods," the level of humility varies in the ritual circle, from the 'gods as friends who do favors' of some traditions to the 'gods who smite hubris' of others. What follows is a non-Wiccan example of Ritual Witchcraft, an invocation to Apollo to show the answer to a difficult question. It has much in common with the invocation of the All given above, but the speaker's relationship to a pantheon that not only hates hubris but coined the term, shows clearly.

After making an anonymous donation to the care of a site sacred to Apollo, the woman burns cakes of barley and laurel leaves upon a small brazier in a sanctified grove. Covering her head and laying upon the ground, she speaks: "Far-seeing one, who speaks to my soul, I come to you in the greatest of need, having tried all options I see to help myself. I am loved by two men who will not share me but who my heart sees as equal. If it be your Will, let your molten light pour into me, expanding me until I understand what is to be done. I accept gladly the burden of the seeing and all that it entails. If you will not help, think kindly on me nonetheless and forgive the imposition. Great one! I beg of you your help in whatever form it comes! Lord of my heart, help me!"

We see here a distinct difference—instead of doing things to manipulate the attention of the gods, she does what she feels will please her god and bring his positive attention to her plight. She is not just respectful, but attempts to turn any anger her god may feel at the imposition away from her. Unlike the mage, who expects to get what she deserves because she has said so, this woman is a suppliant, hoping for assistance but understanding that it may not be a part of her patron's plan for her.

Wicca, properly practiced, is much closer to the prayer to Apollo, above, than the example of Operative Witchcraft before it. Some Wiccans practice both, but more and more Wiccans are following a

path of pure faith instead of a path of spells and manipulations. For many Wiccans, a balance is struck by practicing secular magick and removing pure magickal elements from their practice of the Wiccan faith, for others, Operative Witchcraft is just one more tool of ritual. At its heart it is easiest to think of Wicca as one form of Ritual Witchcraft, like all religions, that does not prohibit Operative Witchcraft, as many other religions do.

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Book Three:

A Book of Light

The following is a compilation of rituals donated by the various covens of Universal Eclectic Wicca. By no means are they our only rituals, nor are the concepts completely original. They are here as suggestions, as emergency rituals, and as examples. Out of professional courtesy and where possible, the Coven or person who created the ritual has been mentioned. Many of these rituals were especially created for this work, and all of the information within these rituals is contained herein, any unusual terms have been described in the dictionary that follows, or are self-explanatory.

A note for our Internet friends: Please do not violate the copyright of our authors by reprinting these rituals, without permission, on your website. Many of these are available online through the URLs given in the Internet Resource Guide at the end of this book. You do not need permission to link to the rituals.

1. The Universal Eclectic Wicca Self-Dedication
2. Casting a Circle
3. Cakes and Ale
4. Closing the Circle
5. Full Moon Rite with Drawing Down
6. Equinox Rituals
7. Solstice Rituals
8. Beltane
9. Lughnasa
10. Samhain
11. Imbolc
12. A Pagan Thanksgiving: "Final feast"
13. Funeral Rite
14. Handfasting I
15. Handfasting II
16. Healing Ceremony for abuse survivors

17. Tools, Runes or Tarot deck consecration
18. Stress relieving ceremony, Solitary
19. Oath Signing ceremony for the Second Circle
20. Land dedication
21. Dedication for coven members

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The Self-Dedication of Universal Eclectic Wicca

Author: Anonymous Solitary

Usage: Upon achieving the First Circle, the Wiccan uses this oath to dedicate himself to the craft. There is no need for an initiation with this ritual under your belt.

Appropriate Day/Night: Any holiday, the Wiccan's Birthday, Full moon or when needed. Preferably at dawn.

Requirements: A purifying bath, a pentacle on a string or a necklace, ring or similar thing.

This can be done within a cast circle or not. First purify your body with a bath or shower, concentrating on putting the past behind you. Stand firm to the ground, holding the pentacle in both hands and showing it to the sun.

I am "your name," I have been shown the Five Points and the Way, and choose to live by life by the Wiccan Rede and the Greater Law it represents. In my hand I hold the pentacle, symbol of the Elements, Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit. Five laws I have been shown, and by the Five I choose to live. I am aware of my actions and I take responsibility for what I've done and what I shall do. (Optional: "To show this new Self, I have taken a new name, _____, which is what I shall be named in The eyes of the Gods-and wherever else your name will be used, including "in the eyes of the

Wicca," etc.) Henceforth, I am no longer "name" I am "Name or craft name" of The Wicca. So Mote It Be!

I consecrate this pentacle with the power of The Sun and the Hidden Moon, and don it knowing the value and depth of it's meaning. Blessed be the Lord and Lady! (Puts pentacle on.) Now my dedication is complete, and the paths are many and varied before me. May I go and grow with happiness and the power of the love of the Gods. So Mote It Be!

Casting a Circle

Author: Arising Coven

Usage: Elaborate Circle or Temple Rite for the Sabbats of a coven, can be altered to a single individual. This is a fairly traditional circle, with some artistic embellishments, and much of the wording is from The Silver Chalice Community, a very structured Wiccan group that disbanded around 1990 into the six prime covens of Universal Eclectic Wicca. Although considered a little old fashioned by most of us (Tamryn's parody of this rite is a fairly infamous occurrence on Beltane) we somehow stick with it, flaws and all, out of a feeling of "owing" it to our founders. A chalk drawing of the circle around which representations of the quarters are made is a nice touch to this, and the drawn chalk drawn circle usually includes not one, but three circles, just under a foot apart. Your Circle should be decided by group tradition and Book of Shadows, of course, this is merely an example. A much simpler rite is given in the first part of this book.

Appropriate Day/Night: Any

Requirements: Athamé, Bell, Chalice, Four Quarter candles, Solar candle (lighter), God and Goddess candles, Salt, Incense, Water, stuff for cakes and ale. Any Other Ritual gear wanted.

This ritual begins with the entire group standing in a circle a small fire or candle is burning on the altar. There should be at least four

people, plus a coven leader. A bell is rung three times by the leader at the altar. (S)He lights the solar candle from the altar flame. *"Kindle this flame from the fire of the Sun, The bell has been rung the Circle begun."* (At the Community a flame would be lit from the first rays of the sun and kept burning until the ritual took place that evening, although "like" easily replaces "from".) The coven leader then holds the flame eastward. *"First in the East, so to the East we are first, lighting the flame like the sun lights the Earth."* The Candle is passed to a person who stands at the East, this person should be a very "air" aligned person, or anyone who feels drawn that way. The East person lights the Yellow candle, saying something about the East, the Air, the sunrise, or whatever, ending with *"so mote it be,"* repeated by the coven. (We refrain from the use of defined statements because they become more boring with repetition.) The leader then takes the lighter candle from them and walks clockwise, reaching the south, (s)he hands the lighter candle to the quarter guard there, saying, *"Fire of Fires, far to the south, The Fire is bright, light casts away doubt."* The Quarter guard makes his/her statement, and then the leader brings the flame to the west. *"Ocean, Sea, River, Pond, lake stream and brook, ever flowing be the water, first home that we took."* (This represents the Silver Chalice Community's strong sense of evolutionary science, and may be changed if found offensive for some reason.) The quarterguard speaks ending with *"so mote it be,"* and is echoed, and the leader continues. *"Grounded in Earth, we rose to touch the air, Blessed be the Earth, sacred Mother, ever fair."* The Quarterguard says his/her thing, then the priestess walks clockwise to the altar, holding the lighter candle aloft. (s)he raises the solar candle and that which represents the moon. *"As the Sun lights the moon, so light, that the heavens shine"* and lights the lunar candle, facing East. The two candles are set down in holders, next to two unlit candles representing the God and Goddess. The Censer, which sits to the east next to the quarter candle is held up by the quarterguard of the East while the quarterguard of the South holds up a small dry branch lit from the South candle. This firebrand is called "the sacred wand." At the same time, The quarterguard of

the West holds up a goblet of water and the guard of the North holds up a dish of salt. The following two sections are performed in synch and timed correctly, are beautiful expressions.

East-South

East "As the sun lights the south and

greet the East.

A union, A bond is formed

United, in Love, the Fire meets the air

West-North

West "As the west waters come
and

meet the North

A gath'ring, a bond is formed

*As one, Together this salt, this
water*

(The incense is raised to the down pointed (3 measures of salt are
firebrand encasing it. As the incense lights, added to the
the firebrand is quenched) water on the point of an

Athame)

Air into fire

Woman to Man

That all may be joined

One with the Earth...

Earth into water

Man to Woman

That all may be joined

...One with the Air...

...One with the Water...

...One with the Fire.

In love and worship in this circle tonight In love and worship in
this circle tonight

South: *Now in Love, Welcome*

All who would join our circle in Love...

...In truth

Welcome Lord and Lady,

Witness our revels, our worship, our love

North: *Now in Love, Welcome.*

...In light..

...In harmony.

Welcome Goddess and God!

And watch over our circle tonight.

*With purest Air, We welcome you!
(South walks around the circle thrice,
censing the air. When finished, the
censer is laid on the altar and North
begins..)*

*With purest water, We welcome you!
(North sprinkles the salted water about the
circle thrice...)*

The tools are placed on the altar and the priestess lights the God and Goddess candles from the lunar/solar ones. *"welcome great ones, who would hear us this fine night, now we begin the change, the alteration of this space, may all who stand purified within who feel in their heart that they cannot worship within feel free to leave."* A moment of space, then the coven sword or Athame is lifted from the altar. The leader walks around from the East, behind the ring of coveners, but within the ring of candles (s)he points the coven sword at the floor, and walks around clockwise once, forming a line just beyond the candles. Once (s)he returns to the East, she faces westward, within the circle. *"Abandon your negative energies, let them burn into the pure air of the circle, Pain Begone! Hatred Begone! Fear Begone! Only Love is Welcome here!"* She travels around once more, again stopping at the East. *"Welcome the positive, Love, light and peace, breathe in the light, banish the darkness!"* she travels once more, stopping at the east and walking forward to the Altar. Laying down the sword, she steps into the circle, where all join hands. *"Blessed are all who inhabit this space, in welcome, in love, in light, in truth, I speak the words of those who have gone before, 'Let peace reign supreme, unity, strength and Love in The All, Our Selves, our Gods be blessed, for here is our temple, our church and sacred site, here is the foundation upon which we build our rites.' Welcome friends, spirits, gods, those who were, are and will be, feel freedom within and love, The one rule is the one law, and by it, all Will be done, The circle is based on Love all, Harm none!"* (then each person in the Circle says "Welcome" to whoever they wish to include, a patron God, a loved one, a spirit, one at a time clockwise, ending with the leader, who welcomes and then says *"By the strength*

and love of all within, this circle is cast, this rite may begin...So mote it be!"
the coven repeats "so mote it be!"

The beauty of this circle involves, to some degree, its complexity, which is why this circle, which is said to "Pull out all the stops," makes a wonderful opening for a Sabbat rite, and a kind of clunky rite for minor rituals. Trimmed down, it is a good functional ritual, and does hold most of the elements required of various traditions. Experiment!

3.

Cakes and Ale

Author: Kaatryn MacMorgan

Usage: Celebratory bit used within ritual, this one was written for this Book of Light, specifically. Traditionally, coveners "A" and "B" would be quarterguards from the above ritual, but this can be reduced, with a little juggling, to solitary practice.

Appropriate Day/Night: Within any ritual

Requirements: A small dish of cakes, biscuits, cookies, especially the Pentacle variations of Full Moon Cookies under Lunar recipes in Book Three. A Goblet or Decanter of wine or fruit juice. A note on properly drinking from a shared goblet: A few simple rules, #1, if you are sick, abstain. #2: don't backwash, that is, don't allow wine that has entered your mouth to return to the goblet. #3: Use only those substances that have alcohol (and thus slightly antiseptic) properties. #4: Clean the rim of the glass with a cloth dipped in rubbing alcohol.

The leader rings a bell or otherwise calls for attention. Two coveners step forward. Leader: *"Now is the time for the symbolic feasts, the representation of all that we eat and drink, all that sustains us. What we ingest here is not mere "wine" and "cakes" (insert appropriate label of food and drink,) but a small part of the whole that is the bounty we are given by our Gods."*

Covener A: (Holding goblet of Wine.) *"Behold! The bounty of the Goddess and God! Drink of the Fruit which gives life! That we may share in their sustenance and share in their Love! For the Lord and Lady!"* (a small amount is poured into ground or libation dish) *"So mote it be!"*

Covener A then toasts his/her patron and matron, before sipping, this short prayer/blessing should be personal, and may be unspoken. It goes around clockwise, then covener B rises with a plate of cakes. *"Behold! The Bounty of the Lord and Lady! Eat of the Grain which sustains us! That all may never go without sustenance and love! For the*

Gods! (A small amount is added to the pool of wine or upon the Libation dish) *So mote it be!"* The Food is passed just as the wine was before, when it has completed the Circle, the leader speaks. *"As we share in this feast, let us remember those who could not feast before our Gods without fear of destruction and cruelty! Let us remember the persecuted, the executed and the frightened. All are welcome here who come in a spirit of peace and love! So mote it be!"* (A moment of silence...then the Circle is closed or other matters brought to discussion. Cakes and Ale should happen after all elements have been taken care of, as a prologue to closing the circle, but a small discussion of events, etc., is appropriate during cakes and ale. A larger feast afterward may be blessed with a rite similar to the Final feast rite, outside the circle.).

4.

Closing the Circle

Author: Arising Coven

Usage: To End the ritual

Appropriate Day/Night: Whenever.

Requirements: The four quarter candles. If desired, a candle snuffer (some trads don't approve of "blowing out" candles.) The God and Goddess Candles.

Leader: *"We met this day/night in love and peace, and our rite was blessed by the light of all within this circle. May the goodness, energy and light within be reflected in our lives without. Blessed be the Lord and Lady, in all the ways they were reflected tonight, as hope, as promise, as healing and as the sacred mother and father to whom we owe our existence."*

East: *"From the East we were granted air, and the first rays of the sun, from the east came light, and from there is shall return."* (snuff candle)

South: *"Holy fire from the south cleansed and tempered us, to there let the fires return."* (snuff)

West: *"Water that is life, brought from the west to nurture, cleanse and uplift, to the west return."* (snuff)

North: *"Earth, from which we came, housed in the North, to the North return."* (snuff)

Leader: *"Lord and Lady, sacred parents, sacred lovers, sacred children, may your light grow ever stronger, lifted into the heavens as moon*

and sun, and reflected in the eyes of all who can gaze skyward with the light of the Law within them." (candles snuffed)

"Now is our rite complete, May the circle be open, but ever unbroken!"

5.

Full Moon Rite with Drawing Down

Author: Bell and Bell Tower Covens

Usage: To celebrate the Full Moon

Appropriate Day/Night: Night of the Full moon, preferably when the moon is low on the horizon to the east.

Requirements: A large round candle or "moon" candle, standard gear. Cast the Circle.

Priest (or covener not doing the drawing down): *"Blessed Lady of the night, she who is called Selene(insert a preferred full moon goddess, if desired), full with love and the power of woman, we stand before you at the cusp, the changing, the end of a cycle and the beginning of a new. For several days we have felt you gathering your power that you might shine so full and so bright upon this sacred night. Oh, she who banishes darkness, shine through the darkness that we never need fear the night."*

"In days of old, meeting in secret, those who went before would raise their eyes to you with the promise that one day the secrets would be unneeded. We raise our eyes to you in fulfillment of those hopes! Now is the time to change, and may this fullness of your power remind us of the fullness of ours, and that, just as you shall wane, so shall we, only to be reborn when all seems lost!"

"We worship in the moonlight not as a worship of the actual satellite, although the powers of the moon are great indeed, but as a worship of all that she represents."

"Blessed Goddesses of the Moon, She of Many names and faces, and especially the face of the mother. (A clear goblet is held aloft to the moon, my suggestion is lemonade, dandelion wine or another cloudy wine, because we want the liquid to absorb the moonlight, not just let it pass through. A drop of skim milk dissolved in a cup of wine is effective, and doesn't change the taste of the wine, but some people seem squeamish about the idea.) Into this goblet may the power of the moon be taken, that we may drink and be renewed in her light, so mote it be."

Drawing down the Moon: (optional) This part should follow the passing of the goblet, unless the coven decides not to. I've seen this a ritual like this abused once, so I suggest only a priestess perform it. By priestess, I mean one who has achieved that level through wisdom and skill regardless of her "motherdom" or ability to have children (as some trads dictate). One of the best drawing down ceremonies I ever attended was performed by a priestess who began life male, so the Goddess obviously knows her own, even if some Wiccans don't. Remember that it isn't genitalia that makes a woman, it's the mind, and if that female mind is in a male body, trust in the Goddess to see the woman.

I know this seems an odd forum to make that statement, but Drawing Down the Moon is not EVER taken lightly by Wiccans, and a few rules need to be established before such ceremony is performed. Ask the following questions before the ritual, if the answer to any of them is no, **don't do this part of the ritual.**

#1: Is the coven comfortable with their priestess, is that persons rank indisputable?

#2: Is the priestess comfortable with this ritual?

#3: Does everyone involved WANT to do this part of the ritual?

#4: Are we sure our motivations aren't greed, showing off, etc.?

#5: Are the vibes okay?

If all your answers are yes, continue.

The priestess should've had a ritual cleansing before the ritual, and now a covener should trace a pentacle upon her forehead with Jasmine

or Clary Sage oil. I really like a plain Silver robe for this ritual, especially a pale silvery silk or satin, it seems to catch the moon and candlelight, and it really glows and with heavier weight material it gently flows with the priestess' movements. Indoors, in daylight, however, these robes often look gaudy, so limit them to this ritual.

The priestess stands in the Goddess position, that is, feet apart and arms outstretched.

Priestess : *"Behold, I stand before the moon, Blessed by her beauty, welcomed by her warmth, to worship in her temple."*

Leader/Priest: Holds lunar, moon candle up to sky behind priestess. *"Blessed Lady of the Moon, she who is called-insert preferred moon goddess names-Descend upon this, your priestess, if you will, and enlighten us as you lighten the world."* The candle descends past the priestess and behind, where it is held. The priestess recites "The Charge of the Moon Goddess" (Appendix H) or speaks "as the spirit moves. When she is done, the leader speaks. *"Thank you, oh Lady, for your Wisdom, may all who come tonight never forget thy words."*

Cakes and Ale

Close the Circle

6.

Equinox Rituals

Author: Wolf Coven

Usage: Autumn and Spring Equinox

Appropriate Day/Night: The Autumn and Spring Equinoxes

Requirements: Regular ritual gear, plus (Spring) Seeds, a Planter. (Autumn) Apples.

For both, the Circle is cast, then, a "Story" of the season is read. The legend of Demeter and Persephone is a Good one for spring. The Legend of the Dying King or the tales of various apple Gods are Good for the Autumn Equinox. New Members tend to take the oath or be welcomed in to the first circle at this point. Once the business at hand is taken care of, the ritual may begin.

Spring Equinox (Ostara.)

The Ritual begins with a planter full of dirt on the altar and each coven member has a seed. Traditionally, these seeds are apple seeds from the autumn ritual. These Rituals are based on New England/Upstate New York harvests, where Lughnasa is the Corn Harvest and The Autumn equinox is the Apple harvest. The seeds are given out in autumn and carried through the winter by the coveners (of course, new coveners will be given seeds before the ritual) For several months, these seeds are "wished" upon, that is, one "places" a

wish onto the seed in the hope that as the seed grows, so will the wish, fulfilling itself when the seed becomes a plant.

Leader: *"Welcome all to this spring time circle! Rejoice! For the Goddess approaches and the winter snows falter in their hold on the ground! The animals that feed and clothe us propagate, the seedlings root and grow and from strong roots the trees shake off the oppression of the snow and send out buds to brave the winter cold. Ware, though, of the dying pangs of winter, Ware the struggle between the dark half and light half of the earth, knowing that to lose your respect for its power is to face obliteration in its fury...no, we are not yet safe from biting winds. Let us remember the blizzards of April and pray that the crops can grow beneath the last vestiges of snow and the last frosts. Rejoice now! We have braved the worst times, we have survived to see the Goddess ascend again to the celestial throne! So turns the wheel of the year!"*

(The planter is raised.) *"Within this vessel, Earth, mother and lover waits for our dreams and goals. Throughout the winter, wishes were made, hopes were hoped, and with this planting may our hopes and dreams flower and grow!"* (each person plants their seed, visualizing the fulfillment of their goals. Upon completion, the leader says "let it grow!", and power is raised, focusing on the planter and the seeds. The power is released and the group moves on to cakes and ale and a discussion of how their winter went.)

Autumn:

Leader: *"Now are we brought together at this the last harvest, the harvest of Apples."* (a great bushel of apples is on the altar, it is lifted by leader and a covener.) Although the apples spilling over the top and at least one covener saying "behold! The harvest is indeed bountiful! Our bushel runneth over!", occurs every year, technically, it isn't supposed to happen that way) Behold the bounty of the harvest, eat of the fruit of the earth! (Apples are passed around. Apple seeds are retrieved, dried off and harvested into a small dish of the sort used for consecrations. Once the seeds are gathered, the Leader holds the dish skyward.) *"Now! Raise power that these seeds will rest, containing within the fruit as the fruit contained them. Never ending is the Cycle! Ever Blessed is the way!"* (power is raised) (Each person is handed a seed, some traditions actually use a little cloth

bag) *"Guard well this seed, and fertilize it with your wishes, hopes and truths, so that in spring, planted, they will thrive and grow. Protect and preserve this seed, that it protect you. So mote it be!"*

The group moves onward to discussions, feasting and the like.

7.

Solstice Rituals

Author: Kaatryn MacMorgan

Usage: To celebrate the Summer Solstice and Winter Solstice (Yule)

Appropriate Day/Night: The Solstices

Requirements: Summer: costumes, flowers, chalice. Yule: Strings of popcorn and cranberries, or cords of pure cotton. Small paper decorations, a wreath made with no plastic, preferably dry (perhaps the wreath from last year's front door?) A Fire. If you cannot have a fire, do a symbolic version in a caldron or pan.

Summer:

This is my favorite, if a bit involved, ritual. We usually (unless restrained by time) gather as many covens as possible into one area for this ritual/enactment, but we've cut it down to five people in the past. This festival is often called Midsummer's Night, although technically it is not. We often choose to celebrate this "Midsummers" in large groups, reserving the more ecstatic midsummer's festival in mid-July as a family event.

Everyone dresses "wild" We've often, with a large enough group, performed Shakespeare's A Midsummer's Night's Dream. I remember playing Hippolyta for the first time in my High School production of Dream,, only to play it again that summer on the field at a Wiccan performance,

and about three times since then...talk about stuck in a rut! The Summer Solstice is when the "weird" stuff happens, and many Wiccans dress as "Faeries" not the fluffy winged kind, but imps, satyrs and sprites, bedecking themselves in earth toned makeup, flower bedecked hair and fun costumes.

This festival of Midsummer begins with a ritual at the sunrise of the longest day of the year. The King and Queen of Solstice are chosen (usually a priest and priestess, often from different covens) And the men and women divide into two groups. A circle is cast around both groups, and the groups in turn encircle the "King" and "Queen". The circle of Women part, and the "queen" steps forward. Often, a special costume has been donned, bedecked with flowers. She holds a large chalice, into which wine has been poured. Many covens choose to perform a small blessing of the wine first. She speaks: *"My husband, son, reveal yourself!"* The "king" comes out from his encircled courtiers.

Queen: *"Face of the Sun, strongest in Power, on this day, you truly are King!"*

King: *"From the Darkness, into strength I have grown, and now, within your womb, I am reborn once more, to face the darkness and be reborn. Mother, wife, drink with me of the light of the sun, that our powers mingle and the light of the sun fills the sky and your womb, that the earth be blessed."* (at this point, it varies. Decided in secret, or impromptu, by the "Queen" and "King," the actions of the "Gods" here ends up with the chalice being handed to the God, who drinks, then offers a drink to the Goddess, representing the spark of divinity being passed to the child she's carried since Beltane.

However, I have seen twice where this didn't quite happen "perfectly". Once, in a year where spring started near January, The Stubborn "Goddess" refused, and a wrestling match, symbolic, I suppose, of the weird weather, ensued. Another time, a "shy" Goddess, symbolizing the spring that kept leaving, needed to be coaxed forward by her "followers." This unexpectedness creates one of two feelings in people. Many understand that this form of reenactment is *very* traditional, with the actions of the symbolized deities suggesting deeper

meanings, but a few feel that such things are irreverent, even to the point of blasphemy, an act of supposing how the Gods feel. This is no different than a "drawing down" ceremony, and the participants are encouraged to "go with" the feelings they get.

If the Midsummer King feels like he should take the cup determinedly, or the Midsummer Queen feels compelled to make a break for it (she is, of course, restrained by the circle,) then so be it! If the weeks after are full of weird weather, it is not the doings of the participants, it may just be the results of a celestial tiff. Remember the Wiccan

Gods are feeling, living Gods, not stodgy textbook characters. They are not infallible.

No one is infallible about anything.

Upon Drinking the King says, *"Let all share in this bounty, drink, and find happiness!"*

The goblet is passed, refilled if needed, but passed nonetheless. The Circle is dismantled around the participants, and then the king says. *"With the light! Let there be merriment! Let there be glory! Go forth, enjoy! Remember! Blessed are all who shared in this rite this day!"*

The partying begins.

Yule:

This is best done outside, in a place where you can create a large fire. People inscribe wishes, wants, good fortunes and the like on papers, and tie them with non-plastic ribbons. The circle is cast.(if the wreath is to be taken outside, do this before casting the circle, in a nice warm spot. Each person winds a cord or string around the wreath while telling a tale of Yule, childbearing, and the like. Wishes and dreams are hoped for. The wreath is then laid down (we take it outside, use a fireplace or use a room where a firepit is central, like a large temple with good ventilation., a friend's dirt floored Garage, with its huge skylight open, is perfect. (We also barbecue there in January, and hold rituals year round within it. Since his car is parked in a different building, the term "garage" is debatable.) The wreath is laid down within the middle of the circle, and each person lays his or her

"wishes" within it Leader speaks: *"Now, the child God takes his first breath and the Goddess sleeps beneath the blanket of the snow. Let us kindle the fire of the new God, with our wishes, hopes and dreams to carry him upward."* (The wreath is lit...the group chants, or sings, or otherwise celebrates the birth of the sun, circling round the fire.) As it begins to go out, the leader says: *"Fire of heaven, bringer of light, be strengthened, be healed, grow and learn, that we, too may be rekindled when our time comes. Blessed Be the Lord of the Sun! Be born anew! Blessed be the Goddess! Rest, for your job, for now, is done! May we all find what we desire beneath the youthful sun!"*

Cakes and Ale

Close the Circle.

8.

Beltane

Author: Black Water Coven

Usage: Beltane This is a Maypole dance/ritual.

Appropriate Day/Night: Beltane

Requirements: A Maypole, Garlands of flowers, flower crowns.
Cast Circle.

Each person tells a story or sings a song of May, including the story of Persephone. May day is her homecoming, the presentation of the Lord and Lady in their splendor. Have fun!

A Maypole stands in the middle of the circle, the bottom of which is heaped with flowers. The leader hands everyone a crown of flowers, instructing them to place it on the head of a friend, the person next to them, whoever they wish to. *"Crowned in flowers and love, let us go forth with the merriment of May!"* Each person takes up a ribbon on the Maypole. *"As the circle of life turns, so shall we"* (the men go counter-clockwise, the women clockwise, weaving in and out. (Chant/song) *"Round and round and out to light, Circle, circle, turning right, Comes the May queen shining bright, round and round and out to light. Blessed woman, blessed man, grant us peace, to know the plan, summer's bounty, winter's wrath, never straying from the Path. Celebrate we, this Beltane Day, comes the summer, queen of May, Shining Lady and her knight, Circle, Circle, glowing bright."*

The dance ends. Leader holds a cup. *"Blessed Lord and Lady, we thank you for the spring, for the winter we survived and the harvest which lies ahead. As we turn so the great wheel of the year has turned. We drink of the first true day of light! (The goblet is passed.) As we've lived, so shall we stay, worship, revel, Welcome May! Wish good fortune to friend family, animal and tree, Lord and Lady, Let it be!"*

9.

Lughnasa

Author: Anonymous Solitary

Usage: To celebrate Lughnasa, the feast of First Harvest

Appropriate Day/Night: Last night of July

Requirements: Corn Dollies (made from local grain) are excellent altar decorations, but a candle can be used instead of the doll. Corn (see Note.) A cord for each member.

Note: Imbolc and Lughnasa are the Turning (or Liminal) Holidays, they fall midway between the two halves of the year and are “pushed” by rituals involving imagery of Circle and Wheels. Lughnasa is also a harvest festival, in this case the corn harvest, which precedes the apple harvest in the Northeast. In some parts of the country and in places where the primary grain is wheat, Lughnasa and The Autumn Equinox are “switched” with Lughnasa the “fruit” harvest and Autumn the “corn” harvest. I strongly encourage those in other parts of the country to customize this ritual:

Circle is cast.

Leader: *“Now we have come together to celebrate the Turning of the great Wheel that is the Earth, and the changing once more of the land. For now is the harvest and the turning of the soil in preparation for the great trial that is the winter. Thankful of the Gods, we meet to share the bounty of the Earth,”*

(a bushel of corn is raised, the leader passes some to each person. We generally use White, Red and Blue dried Indian Corn, representing the Maiden, Mother and Crone, tied in small bundles with ribbon and the first of the fall leaves, these are then hung on doors or otherwise displayed through Yule.) "Take of the Mother that we all be nurtured and reborn this holiday." (A story is then told, often by the Coven Bard, about the meaning of Corn to the people of the area. This may be a legend, a news piece, a song, or any piece of vocal art that the coven wishes, preferably from a local source, After this, the leader and the group discuss the news of the season and their plans for Samhain. Each person then speaks in turn, announcing those things that they hope to complete before Samhain. Lughnasa is also the holiday of "Completion." and any nagging works should be finished within a few weeks of Samhain. The leader then gestures for all to stand, leaving the corn in place.)

Each person takes out a cord and the circle is told: *"Now we rise and encircle, to turn the wheel of the year toward the ever darkening horizon, moving forward into Autumn then Winter, may we have ease as does the land 'til then, our needs met and our projects completed."* (The Circle moves inward, and each person takes their cord and links it through the person opposite them, so that when they step away, the cords, in pairs of two, form spokes in a wheel. Some covens use more intricate measures, "hitching" all the cords together, or hitch all cords through a small ring, but this is easiest, and seems to be the tradition for most covens. At the leaders signal the group circles around turning the wheel.) *"And so spins the wheel of the year, turning for one day to the next in never-ending cycle. Amazed, we can only turn with the circle and watch where it takes us, so forward, spin toward the fulfillment of dreams, an eternal harvest, no want, all needs fulfilled. So might it be!"*

(Each person releases one end of their cord and the circle "falls" apart.) *"And so entwined we realize our interdependency and our independence, with each other, with the Gods and With the Earth, now we eat and Drink of this harvest, our hopes and aspirations burning within our minds*

and within our grasps. With the help of friends and the Gods, may we feel secure to stand at the summit and reach over the edge to seize our legacy and mold it with Hope and Will into the lives we deserve. Let the Cakes and Ale be shared!"

Cakes and Ale, followed by the "closing" of the Circle and a feast.

10.

Samhain

Author: Black Water Coven

Usage: To celebrate Samhain, the feast of the dead.

Appropriate Day/Night: October 31st

Requirements: A large feast, a rope, masks, Jack-o-lanterns as decorations, a small fire or a bunch of candles within a bowl of caldron, papers with writing defined by the user.

Samhain marks the beginning of a new Wiccan Year, and as such, the celebrations afterward are often jovial, champagne and streamer type affairs, but the actual Samhain holiday represents a dark time for Pagans. It is Persephone's descent and subsequent deflowering in the realm of Hades, a time when darkness is upon us and our voices are raised not in mere celebration but in pleas of mercy, "let the hay grow enough for one more harvest," "make winter easy," "bring peace to my house," "Protect us from the harsh winter winds." I once had a vision, when visiting a showing of a friend's artwork, a mental painting that fit his style. I paint very little, but this image, of a profiled Demeter, face racked in sorrow as a flower strewn Persephone is dragged away by a shadowy figure in the foreground, has haunted me, just out of reach of the paintbrush. This tear, this pain on Demeter's face is what Samhain is, the descent into darkness.

Circle is cast as the sunsets, and the area should get steadily darker during the ritual.

Leader: "Now is the last setting of the sun upon the year that was, and we travel downward into the year that is. As the sun sets and the new day begins, the circle turns once more and the veil that separates the living from the dead is thinnest. We mask our faces so the dead may not find us, inviting only those we love to accompany us into this circle and into our feasting tonight. (Two coveners suspend a rope, tied in a large circle, forming a doorway with it. The leader cuts a space within the door with the Athamé, and the group parts.) "Enter, friends, loves, family, and all who wish to celebrate this night with us, let all be welcomed within that possess the spirit of goodness and live by our law, The Wiccan Rede." All: "An it harm none, do as you will." Leader: "Let all who do not wish to be a part leave now" (Pause. The Rope is dropped and a pentacle drawn where the door had been.) "Now are all met within this circle to turn the wheel of the year once more. The fire/candles is/are lit in the center of the circle, and each person brings forth his or her "sacrifice." This is not, as some may think, a living creature killed for enjoyment, but a piece of paper detailing a resolution for the New Year. Written on this paper are things like "Cigarette Smoking," "Co-dependency," "Guilt over a friend's death," things that one sacrifices for the benefit of Self and Universe, and those things which we "sacrifice" to honor the Gods. When the paper is burned in the fire, there is no "turning back," that thing is destroyed, and a commitment is made. If what is given up is a material possession, it must be dealt with before Yule, preferably by donating to charity privately. No one knows what is written but the person who wrote it and the Gods, so no one may "make" you give something up. In an older trad the "sacrifice is of something that binds the soul to this plain, a hurt or guilt." Samhain is a fresh start.

After all the papers are brought out, the leader speaks: "Now we give up that which binds us, guilt, addictions and pains, to make a new start before the gods. Into the fire with them! That they never follow us again! into the pure fire of the Gods cast all your troubles that

you better meet the trial ahead, for now is the darkness of the year and the time of testing! Sage is thrown onto the fire. Be cleansed! Breathe deep of the knowledge of the Circle that is Life, Breathe Deep of the love of the Gods and be free of your Bonds. As the Goddess has decreed, Arise, Excel, Be Free!" (Coven begins to hum and chant softly, building through the following.)

Leader: (over rising voices) Awaken the New Year with the strength of your voice, bring forth the Magick and bring forth the night! Begin with a Whisper and holler with Might, Shake the Earth, Sky and Waters this glorious night, Be it ever as right as the Goddess decreed, Arise and Excel, Arise and be free, by the powers we're given..."

All (yell): SO MOTE IT BE!

The Circle is closed, and feasting commences.

11.

Imbolc

Author: Kat MacMorgan

Usage: To celebrate Imbolc, the festival of Fire.

Appropriate Day/Night: The First or Second day of February

Requirements: Candles.

Circle is cast.

Leader: *"Now is the time when the circle of the year begins its descent toward the blessed days of light. So now does the snow begin to fall, and many miles away the ice is cracking as the Earth shakes free of the darkness."* Leader lights a candle from the altar *"Now, the circle of Fire rises in the east and the spring is kindled."* (He lights the east most covener's candle.) *"Alight wheel, light the Earth!"* The covener passes the fire to the next candle, saying *"Alight Wheel,"* the next covener says, *"Light the Earth,"* and the candles are lit clockwise, each repeating the two phrases. When the entire circle is lit, Leader speaks. *"Round and round turns the circle of light, come spring, touch us with the warmth of the sun."* Covenanters walk around circle. *"Turning, turning, the circle bright, Circle, turning bringing light! As on Earth so shall it be above, As the light grows, so grows the light above, Arise light, and thaw the earth that we may harvest better of its bounty."* Covenanters raise the candles high, ceasing to walk. *"So grows the light of spring in strength, and glory, so grows our own light as we walk forward, may we be ever grounded in the light!"*

The next part of the ritual is too diverse to list. Depending on area, one may pray that the snows be less harsh, have a symbolic ice breaking or just up and end it there. Put simply, what should follow is an enactment of the season designed by the coven/practitioner, then cakes and ale. Imbolc is a poor time for Magick, so refrain from performing such acts within the ritual.

12.

A Pagan Thanksgiving: "Final Feast"

Author: Jonah "Windsinger" and Kat MacMorgan

Usage: This is said much as "grace" around the table.

Appropriate Day/Night: Thanksgiving, or thirteen days before Yule

Requirements: Turkey, pumpkin, corn, yams, potatoes, cranberry sauce (preferably not a cylinder of jelly arranged on lettuce leaves...see recipe, Book two) other food. Four candles, apple wine or cider.

This is a very Northeast rite, which is appropriate since thanksgiving claims to commemorate events at Plymouth.

The Food is laid out of the table. The head(s) of the family light candles in the cardinal colors around the dining place, casting a sort of mini-circle around the room. One of them rises, while rest of family sits. Corn is held up. We use bread and butter corn or blue corn or a mixture of corn, preferably on the cob. Leader: *"Corn sustained the ancestors through the years. The Spirits of Corn are generous, and bountiful, and from them may we gain a bounty of our own. Corn, that weathers the storms, the droughts, and the floods, to rise once more. May the corn grow strong."* (The corn is passed, clockwise, of course.) Second person lifts yams and/or potatoes. *"As Persephone descended and was covered over by the black soil, so this food was hidden deep in the earth. In the rough winter to come may we be grounded and protected from that which would harm us like the mother Earth protects this food. (Pumpkin: Pie or cut) Samhain, we*

sliced faces in the pumpkin, it was little more than a toy. Now, it preserves us, by providing what the soil cannot and keeping us throughout the winter. A toy no more."

(Turkey Carving) *"Game has preserved us from generation to generation. What the Goddess cannot give, the animals sacrifice for us. To eat meat we bear the responsibility of that which we consume, we must give for what we take. Oh lord and lady, thank you for your blessings, many as they are. We are thankful for this feast and each other,"* (A bunch of we are thankfuls follow, followed by I am thankfuls from the whole table.) The apple wine is passed, goblets held high, the youngest says. *"May our future survive as the past did, with lessons learned and all debts paid. May the Plants keep growing and the water keep flowing, Blessed be all who feast this day!"* Toast.

13.

A Funeral Rite

Author: Anonymous

Usage: For planting the memorial tree. If legal where you live, the ashes may be interred during this rite.

Appropriate Day/Night: whenever

Requirements: A few of the items of the deceased, a tree, wine.

Leader: *"We have come together to this place to celebrate a life that was. _____ has gone to seek the answers to the questions that cannot be answered in life. The Cycle of rebirth mutes our mourning, for we know that the person who was is a new person, perhaps far, perhaps near. We bring gifts for their tree...wine, memories. Digging has left a hole in the earth, and a hole in our lives is left by his/her death. As we fill the hole, so we fill our lives, with the beauty of the person that was and the hope for the person that is or will be."* (Each person then lays a gift in the hole, a bottle of the deceased favorite wine, a poem, the person's Book of Shadows, documents, picture, whatever. Each person explains the gift before laying it within the hole. When each has had their say, the leader lifts a goblet and pours wine into the hole) *"Lord and lady watch over _____, and grant him/her the kind of next life (s)he wants. Teach him/her his/her lessons and watch over him/her as you watch over us. (The tree is lowered into the hole and each person uses the soil around to pack it gently in. _____, this*

is your spirit tree, may you hear all that your friends say and be blessed by their good wishes."

From then on the friend of the deceased leave trinkets and offerings, just as they would at a tombstone. The preservation of the spirit tree is a clan and coven duty, and if it should fall or be diseased it must be repaired or a new tree planted. The power of the Spirit tree is indisputable, and the comfort of simply putting your arms around the tree and hugging is immense. Following the planting there is often a party, where the loved one is rejoiced in song, dance and feasting. The dead move on, and mourning, while natural, need not be maintained to "honor" the dead. Indeed, by being reborn afterward, and moving on, you honor them further.

The Faerie tree is a spirit tree of a friend of mine who loved Faeries, the seven year old white oak looks at least twenty years old, and the glittering of the thousands of Faeries, in pewter, crystal, wood and even glass which have been fastened with tree-safe plastic hooks and line, sparkles in the moonlight on the full moon. Already, the kids in the area, prevented from vandalizing the tree by the Irish wolfhound that patrols the yard, have decided that at least seven real Faeries live in the tree. They may be right.

14.

Handfasting, version I

Author: Black Water and Bell Covens

Usage: A Wiccan "wedding"

Appropriate Day/Night: Any, Beltane is nice.

Requirements: Two cords. Handfasting oaths.

Within a cast circle:

Priestess:

(A speech about love, the ceremony and the participants is given, then a little bit of the day, and its significance. This can be about a holiday, or a month, a phase of the moon, whatever.) "_____ and _____ have decreed that upon this day, they shall begin their new lives as a partnership. _____, step forward. With what intentions do you seek this handfasting?" (Answers) "_____, step forward. With what intentions do you seek this handfasting?" (answers) "_____, knowing _____'s intentions, do you still wish this rite to occur? (answers) _____, knowing _____'s intentions, do you still wish this rite to occur?" (answers) (if everything is still okay...)

Priestess gathers their hands and unites them: "_____ and _____ have prepared their own handfasting oaths." (The oaths are recited.) "_____, do you wish to be handfasted to _____, for as long as love shall last?" (answer) "_____, do you wish to be handfasted to _____, for as long as love shall last?" (answer) (Hands

wrapped with cords, which are intertwined.) *"May these cords bind your hands as your vows bind your hearts, and may your love withstand the storms of human nature, and, being tempered, create a greater bond. _____ and _____ are one before the Lord and Lady, Blessed they be on this merry day! Gather round, friends and family, and embrace this partnership, embraced before us by heaven and Earth! May love last long!"* Everyone: *"So mote it be!"* (or *"Handfast!"*)

15.

Handfasting, version II

Author: Black Water and Bell Covens

Usage: This is a handfasting as above, only for a year and a day.

Appropriate Day/Night: whenever, or a year and two days after the last handfasting.

Requirements: As Handfasting I.

Perform Handfasting above until reaching the line of: "Do you wish to be handfasted to ____" from there, proceed as follows: "*_____, do you consent to be handfasted to _____ for a year and a day, and do you consent to appear before us on (date and year after one year and a day.) to announce intentions you may have?*" (Repeat for second partner, the cords are wrapped around their hands, priestess says:) "*Bound in love, before the eyes of the Gods, _____ and _____ are handfasted until (date) that they may learn and grow together within the eyes of the Gods. The length of their Handfasting is not a lack of love, or a lack of commitment, but the understanding that as time passes, people change. May we gather often to hear their vows again! _____ and _____ are handfasted before friends, family, and the Gods, Let all celebrate in their love and glory!*" Everyone: "So mote it Be!" (or "Handfast!")

16.

Healing Ceremony for Abuse Survivors

Author: Phoenix MacMorgan in *The Green* (The Newsletter of Religion: Other), Samhain, 1994.

Usage: To aid in the healing of those who have been abused.

Appropriate Day/Night: New Moon or The Day before Samhain, or any day/night.

Requirements: A mirror. Burning Sage. String. A contained fire.

The leader should cast the circle in whatever manner they feel is most appropriate. The Leader should then bring in each participant individually, saying, *"You are now entering sacred space. Nothing evil can remain here. The only bonds that hold you in this circle are the bonds that you allow."*

After all are in the Circle, close it, saying, *"This Circle is sacred space. All here belong to the Gods and Goddesses and to themselves."*

Lead everyone to the East, saying, *"This is the East, the quarter of Air."* Take burning sage and cleanse each person, saying, *"Let the wind blow and cleanse you from all that has been done to you in the past. Breathe deep the first breath of your new life."*

Next, go to the south, saying, *"This is the south, the quarter of Fire."* Take a string and loosely bind each person's hands, saying, *"This is that which binds you, and holds you back from owning yourself. Break free,*

and let the Fire burn away all of your past. It has no hold on you now." Allow them to free themselves, and then burn the strings.

Next go to the west, saying, *"This is the west, the quarter of water."* Take Water and bathe each person's hands and face, saying: *"In the West you are reborn, with the water you are made pure."* Finally go to the North, saying, *"This is the North, the quarter of Earth. In the earth we bury our past and are grounded in our new lives."*

Hold a mirror up to each person and have him or her look into it and repeat after you. *"This is my body and mine alone. I reclaim myself as pure and holy."* It may take a person some time to say the words and face the mirror. Don't let them look away if possible.

Bring everyone back to the center, saying: *"you are free. Your Bodies are temples and holy and only you decide who shares them and on what level. Having reclaimed yourselves, go forth in joy and strength."* Dismiss the circle. This ritual is very powerful. Do not work it with other ritual work, and make sure all participants are aware of what will happen.

17.

Tools, Runes or Tarot Deck Consecration

Author: Bell Tower Coven

Usage: To prepare tools, Runes, Tarot decks and anything else deemed appropriate.

Appropriate Day/Night: Any, Full moon is good.

Requirements: Salt, Water, Incense, Candle, Anointing oil, normal ritual gear, item(s) to be consecrated, Plate or dish, a fairly solid Self.

Lay a plate upon the altar, placing all things to be consecrated upon the dish. If consecrating a Tarot deck, fan it out, and instead of regular anointing oil use an alcohol based extract, avoid direct contact with flame when using such extracts! Above these things, hold the Athamé or wand saying, *"Behold these things which I consecrate this day/night, anointing them with the power of the Self and the Gods that they be used in clarity with purpose!"* (Pass incense over the items, blowing the smoke downward if it is a very light smoke) *"Passed through the sacred air, all evil is cleansed and all are reborn!"* (Pass the plate over the candle flame) *"Passed through Fire, all is cleansed and tested."* (You should have salted water from the circle casting, trace with a finger dampened with this water a pentacle upon the items (trace a pentacle on the deck of tarot, or each separately.) *"Behold, the mark of the Gods in Water! All is made Pure!"* (Sprinkle sand upon plate) *"Into Earth may all our blood flow, be filtered, grounded, healed! For I am _____, and I*

claim these things as mine, sacred in usage, perfect in their purity, let nothing part me from these things lest it be necessary! For I am _____" (Mark the items with your sigil, name, or a symbol that represents YOU, and picture the items as always in your grasp and control. Imagine, if you will that this oil you anoint them with flows from your pores, is of you. Do not doubt for a moment that these things are items of Will, and parts of you, tools of yours, upon completion, invoke your P/Matron Gods and say the following.) "*_____ and _____, watch over these and I that I use them in clarity and true purpose, as is my Will, so be it yours!*" (a nice way to end this is to hold your hands about eighteen inches apart, with your thumbs at near right angles to the hands, bring your hands together sharply, putting out the candle flames below them. This requires practice, but while you are doing it, visualize an auric light forming, which, upon the sudden closing of your hands is "forced" into the items. You should not have crystals on the altar for this!!! Crystals are power "batteries," and Tarot, much jewelry and ritual items hold power only reluctantly, in turn, releasing it only when necessary. Crystals, on the other hand "Suck up" power, and are easily drained. "Charging a crystal" consists of merely holding it when you feel full of power. If you do this often, you may notice a "tingle" in the crystal, when it is already full, then consecrate it, or better yet, consecrate crystals alone.

18.

Stress Relieving Ceremony

Author: Black Water Coven

Usage: To relieve stress

Appropriate Day/Night: whenever

Requirements: A censer or dish with lit charcoal, a bowl of water, herbs or incense.

Cast a Circle. (Or, do this within a bathtub with a bottle of incredible Irish beer)

Visualize all of the stress as the incense or herbs. Breathe deeply, hold, then cast some of the incense on the charcoal, saying, *"Into smoke, fly toward the heavens, leave my body, be gone!"* and visualize the stress flowing out of your body with the air which pushes awake the smoke. Breathe deeply, then exhale again, saying the same thing. Do this a total of three times, or as long as you feel necessary to remove the stress. Dip your hand in the water, then brush your eyes, lips, forehead and neck with a damp hand. Sprinkle a small amount of water on the charcoal, saying: *"I am cleansed of this negativity, I am ready to go forth unhindered by those bonds."* Do this three times, extinguishing the charcoal with the last water. Close the Circle.

19.

Oath Signing Ceremony for the Second Circle

Author: Anonymous

Usage: To sign the oath of the Second circle.

Appropriate Day/Night: Whenever, especially on a holiday.

Requirements: Completion of the First Circle Studies. A copy of the oath, a pen, a cast circle, friends. Gifts are often given to the covener moving "up" not material goods, but songs, thoughts, and prayers.

Leader: "*_____, you have come to a place in your studies where you have chosen to extend your path. The Second Circle lies waiting, but there are rules. Do you swear to live by the five points, taking responsibility for your actions and educating when asked?*" (Covener answers)

"Do you swear to turn none away in need of help without good cause?"
(Answers)

"Do you swear to defend Wicca from slander and misuse, knowing you, too, will be defended?" (Answers)

"What do you ask in return for your teachings?" (Answer: "Nothing but the respect a teacher deserves.")

"To whom does the responsibility to fix that which is wrongly taught fall?"
(*"The teacher"*)

"Do you swear that you practice Wicca, and that all of your actions are practiced with a free Will?" ("Yes")

"Do you swear to never restrict or deny the Will of a student?" ("Yes")

"Are you fully aware of the ramifications of this Oath and do you swear it before the eyes of The Lord and Lady in truth?" (Answer)

"So mote it be. Hear all, _____ is now of the Second Circle! Welcome and be blessed!"

(A copy is signed and witnessed.)

20.

Land Dedication

Author: Black Water Coven

Usage: As a dedication for preserved land.

Appropriate Day/Night: Any

Requirements: None, save normal ritual gear and a goblet of wine. The Circle is cast. If possible, the circle is cast around the land, if not, somewhere near the middle, this is often done in the "middle" of another ritual.

Leader: *"Lord and Lady, please accept this land as your own, where animals, people and plants may grow and thrive with the respect they deserve! Watch over this land, and aid us in its protection and preservation! We have purchased the rights of this land with the intention of giving something back and (intentions stated.) Please watch over us and our endeavors, and help us know what is good for this land. Be free, soil and tree, know that you will live, that you will grow. Know that we respect you! Know that we will help you! Know that we would only take from you in direst need and only to give twice in return! Thrive! Expand! Be healthy and happy, that your spirit be reawakened, removed from the decay of uncaring humankind and placed into the stewardship of those who mean you no harm, who wish no profit from you beyond that which you give merely by being. Be Blessed!"*

Cakes and ale and/or other ceremonies

Close the circle.

21.

Dedication for Coven Members (Covening)

Author: Wolf Coven

Usage: As a dedication for people in a coven.

Appropriate Day/Night: Any

Requirements: (This is for people who have achieved the First Circle.) A Covening Gift for each member. This usually is a ritual tool or a piece of jewelry that the coven has purchased. The Symbolism of the gift is expressed in the ceremony when the gift is given, like "To Fred we give this wand, firebrand of the ages, extension of power, symbol of man." Or "To Wilma we give this crystal of clear sight, that each of her facets shine brightly within and outside this, our coven." Pentacles are also provided to the students, in Silver, clay, wood or whatever is available, and hung on a string, ring, earring or bracelet. It is completely acceptable for the student to bring his/her own pentacle, which is consecrated before the ritual.

Leader: *"Today is a glorious day, for _____(names) has/have consented to join with us in the eyes of the Gods. Coven member(s), friend(s), family, _____ is/are no longer just (a) face(s), but (a) Member(s) of the Greater Clan that is the Wicca. Each/He/She has demonstrated full knowledge of the laws which bind us and as such, the coven presents this/these gift(s) (gifts are presented) Pentacles are offered. Each person performs the following, just as in the solitary dedication."*

"I am "your name," I have been shown the five points and the Way, and choose to live by life by the Wiccan Rede and the Greater Law. In my hand I hold the pentacle, symbol of the Elements, Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit. Five laws I have been shown, and by the Five I choose to live. I am aware of my actions and I take responsibility for what I've done and what I shall do." (Optional: "To show this new Self, I have taken a new name, _____, which is what I shall be named in The eyes of the Gods and wherever else your name will be used, including "in the eyes of the Wicca, etc.) "Henceforth, I am no longer "name" I am "Name or craft name" of The Wicca. So Mote It Be!"

"This pentacle is consecrated with the power of The Sun and Moon, and I don it knowing the value and depth of its meaning. Blessed be the Lord and Lady! (Puts pentacle on.) Now my dedication is complete, and the paths are many and varied before me. May I go and grow with happiness and the power of the love of the Gods. So Mote It Be!"

Coven: "So mote it be!"

Book Four:

A Dictionary of Modern Paganism

Every Religion has its own language. Many new Wiccans express confusion at the vast number of words being used that they are either unfamiliar with or are seeing in a different way. This dictionary includes abbreviations, netslang and uncommon terms commonly used in Wicca and Paganism.

AAer: One who participates in twelve step programs to the point of nausea, a good example of this is Stuart Smalley from Saturday Night Live's old "Daily Affirmation" bits. Not a very polite term, but since AA is grouped as "New Age" by many folk, you may come across it.

AASB or A-B, A/B: Internet slang For the Hermetic Maxim "As Above, So Below."

Adept: (uh-Dept) One who is good at something, usually this is someone who is proficient Metaphysically.

Aeromancy: (air-oh-mancy) Air Magick

Akasha: (uh-kash-uh) The Fifth Element, Spirit, "heart," or Divinity.

Akashic Record, The: (Uh-Kash-Ick Wreck-urd) The Celestial/Astral Version of the Library of Congress, The Library at Alexandria and The World Wide Web all rolled into one, based on the writings of Edgar Cayce.

Ambidextrous: (Am-bye-Dex-ter-ous) Capable of doing most things equally as well with both hands, also used for someone who swings from Left hand path to Right hand path without blinking.

Amulet: (Am-you-let) A talisman with a mystical or Magickal property.

Anakasha: (ann-uh-kash-ah) Guardian of the Akashic Record or any Guardian of any record, tome or hard disk.

Anhk: (Onk) An Egyptian Symbol, see Symbols, Book Two.

Animism: (anna miz im) Belief that Everything has a spirit/soul.

Arcana: (Ar kan-ah) the “Sets” of the Tarot Deck. The Minor Arcana correspond to playing cards, the Major Arcana are Atu or Trumps.

Ardanes/Ardains: See “Ordains”

ARP: Anal Retentive Pagans, Pagans who are sure that it must be done their way or it’s ruined. Internet Slang.

Artifact: (art-ih-fact) A relic, usually ancient.

Ascension: (A-scen-shun) 1. An improvement in the Total Self. 2. The Christian belief of being “Called to heaven” at judgment day. 3. Going to Heaven. 4. Moving Upward.

Ascension, Major: 1. A sudden improvement of the Total Self, often by fulfilling the Life Quest for this Life, or a task that has been demanded by a God or Spirit. 2. Achieving the next Degree in a coven with a degree system. 3. A sudden jump in all abilities. 4. In reincarnation, the completion of all lives, leading to “oneness” with the “All.”

Ascension, Minor: 1. A life change that alters your path. 2. Death 3. A sudden improvement in a part of the Self or a few abilities.

Asperger: (ahs-pur-jur) or (asp-er-ger) A rarely used tool, a bundle of herbs or small device to sprinkle water with.

Astral: (ahs-tral) or (ahs-trul) 1. Of the stars. 2. Of the heavens. 3. The Plane of existence closest to our own, through which one can move ethereal.

Astral Projection: Using the Will to travel without the body.

Astral, To go: To leave the body or become ethereal

Astralism: (Ahs-tral-ism) The Science of Astral Projection

Astrology: (Ahs-tral-oh-gee) The Art of divining using the location of celestial bodies.

Astronomy: (ahs-tron-oh-me) The Science of cataloging, viewing, studying the stars,
NOT to be confused with Astrology.

Athamé: (eth-uh-may) One of the ritual Blades, see Tools, Book One.

Atu: (ah-two) Trump

Autumn: (Awe-tum) The proper name for the season called "fall."

BAC: (Bee-"A"-see) Born Again Christian. A Christian who has passed his initiation into a specific Christian Sect, some BACs are Fundamentalists, but not all Fundamentalists are BACs.

Balefire: (bayle-fyre) A Bonfire, often on which Bales of sacred herbs, sweet grasses, hay or straw are burned. Also, any ritual around one.

Bane: (Bayne/ Bain) A ward or Destroyer.

Banish: (bann-ish) To make something go away and keep it from coming back. Metaphysically, this means warding something away or locking it up on another plane. It doesn't work on natural denizens of this plane.

Bard: (barred) Storyteller, minstrel and newsperson, the Bard carried gossip and news from town to town before newspapers and the like. The Entertainer and newsperson of the Third Circle.

BB: (beebie) Chat room slang for Blessed be.

Bible: (Bye-bull) Literally: "Book." Anyone of a number of Christian books in publication describing Christian rules, History, and Myths and entitled "The Bible" "The Holy Bible" and so forth. At least ten different versions are in common usage in The United States of America. Commonest among these are The Gideon Bible, which seems relegated to Hotel rooms and bus stations, and The King James Editions, of which there are SO many that we all either own ten or there are enough thrown away to fill at least one landfill. (I myself only own two King James (Modern English, Original) in my collection of 20 Bibles, no two of which are alike.)

Bible Belt: (Bye-Bull Belt) A section of the United states where Religious Radicality is taking longer to die out than in most other places, and has periodic resurgence, especially during flood and tornado season. While the Bible Belt is the center of good, wholesome, non-sexual Americans, it also sports one of the fastest growing group of HIV positive people, something that must be incredibly difficult to explain to the "Belters" who live relatively uncluttered lives free of Condoms and Evolution.

Billiusgatus: (billy-us-gate-us) The Archfiend of computers, to whom periodic sacrifices of memory must be offered. Denying these sacrifices may result in incompatibility and the dreadful disease of outmodedness. A running gag in "wired" Wiccan groups. This really has NOTHING to do with Satanism. Really.

Bind: (Bynd) Restrain.

Black Book: (black buhk) A name for Book of Shadows used by Satanists and some Wiccans.

Blessed Be: (bleh-sed Bee) Not a sacred honey producing bug, but a part of the Ritual of the Five-Fold Kiss. Used by Pagans as a greeting similar to "aloha"

Bob: (bahb) Eris in Disguise. (wink) A patriarchal plot, of course.

Boline or Boleen: (Boe-line or Boe-lean) See Tools, Book One.

Book of Light: (buhk of lite) A public Book of Shadows, said to be revealed to the light.
Also, a Universal Eclectic Wicca coven's Book of Shadows.

Book of Shadows: (buhk of shaah-does) A Wiccan's Ritual Tome. A Book of Light that is kept secret.

BOS or B.O.S.: (Bee-oh-ess) Book of Shadows, slang.

Burning Times, The: (Burr-ning thymes) No, not a Fundamentalist Newspaper or A substitute to burning sage, this is serious!!!! The Burning Times were a period from about 1000ce until 1951 in which thousands of people accused of being Witches were killed. Although by 1951 Witches were no longer being executed, we choose to believe that the Burning Times ended with the repeal of the last law against Witchcraft in England, in 1951. The Ending of the Burning Times began the Age of Modern Wicca, and the publication of Gerald Gardner's *Witchcraft Today* (1954) we became a voice that has grown steadily louder. 1951 is also Year 0 of WE, Wiccan Era, a date used to replace CE (Common Era) in some traditions. CE and BCE are the scholarly replacements for "AD" and "BC" (which can't be proven). When I first worked on All One Wicca, reliable sources quoted the numbers killed in the burning times as low as 1.5 million and as high

as 17 million, but more recent research into the field gives numbers sometimes as little as one one-hundredth of those numbers. The actual numbers of people killed for Wicca, specifically, in those years, was zero. Those killed for "practicing witchcraft" probably number in the tens of thousands, and those killed for heresy probably adds another 10,000 or so. When the definition of burning times includes all killed for not being Christian from 1 CE, the numbers do top out in the millions, and there is no comparable attack on Christians (for example, that Christians were fed en masse to lions by the Romans is a common myth with no factual basis and the persecution of Christians in communist countries is not remotely comparable to the mass executions of indigenous people in the Americas) but that number includes wars of conversion, attacks on indigenous people who will not convert, and the systematic extermination of cultures contrary to Christianity. There is certainly no modern sect of Christianity that can be blamed for all the genocidal acts of Christianity historically, and Christianity's bloody history is no reason to hate the religion itself or condemn its followers.

Cabala, See Kabbalah

Call, To: (cahl) To invoke a spirit.

Candlemas: (can-dul-mahs) A Christian Holiday developed to "cover up" Imbolc. Used by some Trads as a word FOR Imbolc.

Cauldron: (call-dron) A large iron or brass pot used in rituals, hard to find and a stereotype.

Celt: (Kelt) An indigenous people of Europe, especially Ireland, Northern and southern Great Britain, France and Spain.

Celtic: (Keltick) Of The Celts.

Celtics: (Sell-ticks) A Basketball team. What not to call a group of Celts.

Centerpath, The: (Sen-tur-pahth) The Ideal of The Three Paths, to walk a middle line between Selfishness and Selflessness. Not "Neutrality" but caring for the World and The Self equally. The Application of The Ethics of Constant Improvement and Self Responsibility forces this Path.

Cernunnos: (Varies, my pronunciation is "Care-Noon-Ohs") Literally: Horned One. The Celtic Hunter God used in Wicca whose Physical image was adopted by Christianity for the use of their God of Evil. Supplanting the Gods of an indigenous religion with your own "bad guy" was a common occurrence in BCE history and the beginning of CE History.

Chakras: (shock-rahs) The Seven energy focuses of the body. They correspond with the colors of the rainbow and are from Reiki, not Wicca.

Channel, To: (chaah-nul) To "bring" a disembodied being into one's body.

Channeling: The act of calling a disembodied spirit into a body. Easily disproven, often faked.

Charge of The Goddess: Written in its modern form by Doreen Valiente, Two alternate versions are given in Book Five.

Charge, The: See Charge of The Goddess.

Charge, To: put energy into something.

Charm: A Mystical/Magickal property given to something, also an object that has been enchanted.

Cheiromancy: (Kie-row-mancy) Palm Reading.

Cheshire Moon: (che-shire mooohn) When the sickle of moon visible is the bottom and looks like the Cheshire cat's grin.

Circle: (sir-cull) 1. The level one achieves in Universal Eclectic Wicca. 2.To go around. 3.The Wiccan "temple." 4.A coven or group of practioners.

Clan: Your extended family and then some.

Clan-Trad: See Fam-Trad.

Cone of Power: The manifestation of raised energy within a Circle.

Contrary: (Cohn-trair-ee) Some Wiccans use this incorrectly to describe people who work power "backwards." Also used to describe Left-handed folk, again, an incorrect usage.

Corn: Any grain, particularly Zea Mays (Maize) known as American Corn.

Corn Dollies: See "Corn" above. Goddess figure made from the harvest grain of an area. Also Corn Father for a male figure, Corn Mother, Kirn Baby.

Coven: (Cuh-ven)A group of Witches and/or Wiccans meeting together. Also used by Satanists and some Mages. Occasionally limited to thirteen in number.

Cowen: (co-when) One who is not Wiccan.

Craft, The: A term for Wicca or (rarer) Magick. Also the name of a movie from which a generation of teenie boppers got the wrong idea about Wicca.

Crowleyan: (Crow-lee-ann) As/Like Crowley, an unpopular term. A friend's daughter's middle name.

Crowleyist: (Crow-lee-ist) 1. One who studies Crowley but doesn't consider themselves a Thelemite. 2. What Crowleyists call Thelemites when they aren't looking. 3. A person studying the life and times of A. Crowley, rather than the actual theories and philosophies.

Crystallmancy: (Chris-tall-mancy) Scrying with a crystal, the term is also used for other kinds of crystal Magick.

Cunningfolk: (Cunn-ing-folk) Good "Witches," especially of the middle ages.

Cusp: (cuhssp) 1. The Top of a Hill, mentally, emotionally, etc., from which one can only go down. Down-headed. 2. The Day or Hour when an astrological sign changes.

Days of Power, The: These are the Eight Sabbats: Imbolc, Lughnasa, Samhain, Beltane, The Equinoxes and the Solstices.

Dead Mason: (Ded Mayson) Slang For a Hermetic Philosopher or older Metaphysicist, or male metaphysicists (especially from 1850-1950) who are no longer with us. Also used to indicate any library of old metaphysical texts. Some will refer to looking up materials in these libraries as "consulting some dead Masons."

Dedication: (Dead-ih-kay-shun) 1. The "stuff" by which one sticks to something until they're done. 2. A ceremony acknowledging something or someone, most often a purpose, change in purpose or alteration of one's life's path. 3. A ceremony by which one declared to the gods their intention to be a Wiccan.

Deistry: (day/dee-es-tree) A non-sexed alternative to "Theology or Thealogy" becoming popular in Wiccan Circles, also Deiology (Day/dee-ol-e-gy.) "The Science of Gods"

Deosil: (Varies: Dee-oh-sil, Doe-sill, Dee-oh-zil seem most common) Clockwise.

Dianic: (Dy-ann-ick) The Dianic Cult mentioned in Dr. Margaret Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* is that of the God Dianus, but modern Dianic Wicca seems focused on Triformis, especially Selene and, of course, Diana. Dianic Wicca was one of the first feminist trads, and has gone one of two ways over the years, with covens either becoming more open to a two-sided divinity or becoming womyn-exclusive. Dianic Wicca which acknowledges a male divinity even if it isn't paid much attention to is called "Dianic Wicca." Dianic "Wicca" that acknowledges no male divinity is usually called "Dianic Paganism" to distinguish it from the gender-neutrality of Wicca.

Discordian: (Dis-cord-ian) A person, if they exist, who follows Eris, if she exists, but often disguises her in a male facade to further confuse the public, a patriarchal plot, no doubt.

Divination: (dih-vin-"A"-tion) Seeing that which is hidden.

Divine: (dee-vine) See Scry, To. (dih-vine) The Heavens, Gods or Spiritual perfection.

Divinity: (din-vin-ih-ty) That which is, or the power of, The Divine.

Down-Headed: (down-head-ed) Standing at a cusp, about to fall down. Turning for the worse.

Easter: (ee-ster) A Christian holiday instigated to replace Ostara, named for the Saxon deity Eostre.

Ego, Mage's: A side effect of the belief that, with an Integrated Total Self and practice, one can do anything, leading the public to see Mages and other such believers as "Egotists."

Elder: ("L" dur) 1. One older than (s) he coining the term. 2. A Wiccan Priest(ess) of ten or more years. 3. A Semi-poisonous plant.

Elements: ("L" ih-ments) The smallest substances matter is broken into. Not to be Confused with The Five Elements.

Elements, The: Five Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Spirit.

Elementals: In Mythology, creatures of Earth, Air, Fire Water and similar "elements."

Elementals, Paracelsus': Paracelsus, contrary to what his name might make you think, was a Renaissance alchemist of some renown who was born Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus Von Hohenheim in 1493. While he is well regarded for his scientific knowledge, he also provided some really pseudoscientific stinkers, including his "elementals," Slyphs, Undines, Salamanders and Gnomes. Contrary to Paracelsus' views-no scientist has yet to discover these elementals.

Entirety, The: Everything that is, was, will be.

Esbat: (esse-bat or Ezzbat) A Wiccan holiday excepting the Sabbats.

Ethics: (eh-thics) 1. Rules. 2. Morally/Spiritually sound rules.

Evolve: (ee-vok) To call energy from somewhere and bring it within. To call/take energy from something.

Ewwie: (youie) A Practitioner of Universal Eclectic Wicca. A "Youp" is a priest(ess) as in UEWP. Slang

Ex-Christianity: The quasi-religious practice of many former Christians. Not a religion unto itself, Ex-Christianity has its forms in many faiths, including Ex-Christian atheism and "WFEC" (Wiccan-Flavored Ex-Christianity). There is healthy Ex-Christianity, which consists of moving on to your new faith and not giving a large amount of time to discussions of your former faith, and there is unhealthy Ex-Christianity, in which anything Christian is seen as automatically wrong, and the very practice of ones new faith is an act against the former. WFECs, specifically, often damage interfaith relationships and dialog by broad brushing all those of their former faith as evil and wrong.

Eye of Newt: The Attention of the "conservative" Radical Religious Right, whether locally or nationally. Wiccan slang since around 1994. Example: "The Wiccan gathering was lovely except for the Eye of Newt, which posted Jesus loves you signs on our property and called the police on us for dancing. It wasn't so bad-the cops danced too."

Fam-Trad: (Fam-Trad) A branch of Paganism developed by/for a family or clan. Also "Clan-Trad."

Fasinato/Fasination: (Fah-sin-ah-to/Fah-sin-"A"-shun) Fancy words for hypnotism and other effects by which someone is forced to do another's Will.

Feminazi: (Fem-ih-nazi) An insulting term developed by Fundies and embraced by bovine radio hosts as a catch-all for "Ultra-Feminists," Female separatists, Lesbians, Women with educations beyond High School, Democrats, Liberals and housewives who fall into the above categories. The opposite of "Barefoot and pregnant."

Floralia: (Floor-al-ee-a) An ancient Roman festival practiced near Beltane and dedicated to Flora, goddess of Flowers.

FMT: Familial Magickal Traditions. A more specific term for practioners of non-Wiccan Fam-Trads, who do not necessarily call themselves "witches."

Fundamentalist: (Fun-da-mental-ist) 1. One who practices a form of Christianity or other religion where they are right and everyone else is wrong. 2. Religious Extremism. 3. A branch of Protestantism that has divided into two sects and generally prefer to call themselves "bible based" or "Christ-centered" depending on where they fall on their faith's split.

Fundie/Fundy: (Fun-dee) A slang term for Fundamentalists. Rather insulting.

Futhark: (Foo-thark) The name for and first six letters of many rune systems.

G.O.D.: (gee-oh-dee) From a George Bush Sr. speech, the "god" of Christian agendaists, and its followers. Used to describe a person's affiliation with the Radical right, as in, "That politician has "G.O.D." in his pocket.

Gaelic: (Gay-lick) Of Ancient Eire and some surrounding islands. Although not synonymous, it is often used as "Irish"

Gaulic/Gallic: (G'all-ic) Of Gaul, of Ancient France.

Geomancy: (geo-mancy) Earth Magick.

Gerry: (Jer-ry) Internet Slang for Gerald Gardner and/or Gardnerian Wiccans, pretty impolite.

Gnomes: see Elementals, Paracelsus'

Golden Bough: (Gol-den bow (Rhymes with Sold Ben's cow) Mistletoe, Also a fairly good book.

Great Rite, The: 1.The ritual in which procreation is celebrated by the ritual sex of the Priest and Priestess, also called the sacred marriage. Best done in private. 2. The symbolic practice of placing a dagger within a goblet is sometimes called a "symbolic great rite," but many groups refer to that as "the blessing of the waters."

Green Man: See Green, Jack O' The, Also an organization/magazine for Pagan Men

Green, Jack O' The: The Wiccan God, or Green Man, a figure often incorporated into the design of churches as a male face made of foliage. Originally the figure of a subgroup of Celtic mythology, the Green man as adopted into Wicca is different enough to make him distinguishable from the Celtic gods he arose from.

Green, The: The Living Place of the Wiccan hunter god, also "Paradise." The Newsletter of UEW.

Grimoire: (Grimwaur) The book that includes all non-ritual information, particularly metaphysical information.

Grove: A sacred place, often a group or circle of trees. A group of Druids

Guardian: (Gard-ee-n) One Who watches over something.

Guardians of The Quarters: A group of Spirits invoked in some Wiccan ceremonies to protect the circle. What possible ritual would call for such protection is beyond me. Often based on John Dee's

“archangels” or Paracelsus’s “elementals.” Those who do not incorporate Christian symbolism do not regularly use those things.

Guardians of The Watchtowers: A strange occurrence in Wicca, I’ve yet to figure out what the Watchtowers and spirits of Dr. John Dee and Edward Kelley’s works have to do with Casting a Wiccan Circle...Sure enough, this appears to be an aspect of Enochian Wicca. Enochian... Wicca... “Don’t ask me, I just work here.”

Handfasting: A Pagan marriage adopted from ancient Greek and Rom/Romani/Gypsy rites.

Handparting: The end to a handfasting.

Harper: A type of bard, a follower of Harper Wicca.

Harpy: (har-pee) A mythological creature used as a alternative for the insult that rhymes with “witch.”

Heathen: (he-then) Literally: Dweller on the Heath. A Non-Christian.

Henotheism: A form of polytheism in which many (or all) gods are seen as existing, separate entities, but only one or a small number are honored. Most Wiccans are henotheists.

Herbalist: One who studies Herbs and their uses.

Herne: (Hern) See Cernunnos

High Priest(ess): In Universal Eclectic Wicca, one who teaches priest(esse)s, or an elder. An Uew High Priest has a minimum of ten years as a Wiccan Priest. In other Trads, a High Priest(ess) is either a priestess of a very high degree or the coven leader. The use of the term

"High Priest" really means little today when 13 year olds can claim it besides those who've earned it. *Caveat contemplator!*

Homophobe: (Hoe-moe-fobe) One who can't deal with Homosexuals and Homosexuality.

Homosapiens: (hoe-moe-say-pea-ns) Human beings.

Homosexual: Technical term for Gay and Lesbian people. Wiccans believe that no love is evil in and of itself (men have always done evil in the name of love, this makes the acts, not the LOVE evil.) We believe, that since no love is evil, any form of sexuality between consenting adults is a good thing and can have positive results. This is one of the major reasons Wicca has a large, vocal and important Gay and Lesbian community. As a bisexual woman and priestess I've been told I'm confusing the issue. Other Bi, Gay and Lesbian people have told me similar stories. Here is clarification: "Some Wiccans are Homosexuals, some Homosexuals are Wiccans, not all Homosexuals are Wiccan, not all Wiccans are Homosexual, any questions?"

Horned God: Another name for the Wiccan hunter God.

HP/HPs: High Priest, High Priestess.

HPMS: A term from Ashleen O'Gaea's The Family Wicca Book (Llewellyn, 1992) for an HP(s) who needs a celestial knock off their high horse.

Hydromancy: (Hi-dro-mancy) Water Magick

IC: (Eye see) Inner Child, part of ITS.

Imagery: (ih-mah-dry) The Sights described in guided visualization.

Initiate: A Wiccan who has been initiated but not gone further.

Initiation: A mystery-like rite by which one gains entry into a tradition or coven.

Initiation, reciprocal: A process by which a person who is not initiated performs an initiation, and that person is later initiated by the person/people they initiated.

Initiation, Self: Often, self-initiations are impossible. The term is sometimes used synonymously with “dedication.”

Initiation, visiting: An initiation performed by a visiting priest or by visiting another coven.

Integrated Total Self: The first goal of a human being should be fixing a Self that is not integrated. While we are born with a “whole” self, forces of childhood work to tear it apart, resulting in an imbalance in emotional/mental/physical capacity. The ITS is the basis from which Will may be directed.

Invoke: (In-voke) To Magickally use, to put power into something.

ITS: (its) Integrated Total Self.

Kabbalah: (Varies, most common: kah-bal-la or ka-balla) An ancient Hebraic Magickal system. There are literally dozens of phonetic spellings of this term!

Karma: (car-mah) Either the force which tallies your debts or the debts and payments of Karma, see The Five Points of Wiccan Belief, Chapter One, Book One.

Katabasis: A Greek term literally meaning “going down” that is used in discussing the mythology and mystery rites to describe a real or symbolic descent into the underworld.

Kitchen Witch: One who practices basic charms but not much else Magical, often a Fam-Trad practitioner.

Lammas: (La-mas) Another name for Lughnasa, but Lammas is also the name of one of the Four “Satanic Sabbaths.” so I avoid the use of it.

Law, Crowley’s: “Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law, Love is the Law, Love under will” (Thelema)

Law, The Wiccan or The One: The Wiccan Rede, “An it harm none, do as you will.”

Left Hand Path, The: Not the path of “evil,” but the Selfish path, the Path of total absorption in the fulfillment of the individual.

Liminal Holidays: any holiday that marks the beginning of one season and the end of another.

L&L: Love and Light, onling slang.

M(it&p): Popular abbreviation for “Magick In Theory and Practice” by Aleister Crowley, quite possibly the most often quoted work of its type. It is the textbook of “Magick 101,” for many groups.

Macrocosm: (Mac-row-cos-um) The Greater/External world. Macrocosmic Magick is said to be impossible.

Magick: (Mah-jik) The Use of Personal and Extra-Personal energies for various reasons. The habit of spelling it with a k to distinguish it from stage magic was initiated by Crowley and has a historical use nearly

100 years old, longer than several rules of American Grammar. Other spellings of it have a less historical basis.

Magus: (mah-jus) One who practices Magick without the benefit of a Moral Code, also "Mage."

Maj(m), Majin(f): (Mage, Mah-zhin) One who practices Magick within a defined moral guideline. Called "karma-balancers" Maj(in) do services to the powers of Good or Evil to gain their powers, supposedly fictional.

Mass, Black: A rite in some Satanic practice that parodys Catholicism, not found in Wicca.

Matriarchy: (may-tree-arc-ee) A "messed up" system in which women are in charge and men are substandard, see patriarchy.

Maypole: An ancient Pagan phallic symbol danced around to this day to raise power and celebrate the earth..

Mediation: (me-dee-a-shun) Stepping in-between the parties of an argument.

Meditation: (med-ih-tay-shun) Intentional and focused relaxation.

Meditation, Dynamic: Meditation that is performed by a series of movements, as opposed to staying still.

Meditation, Static: Meditation that is performed while staying very still.

Merry Meet: (mary meat) A Wiccan greeting, part of "Merry Meet, Merry Part, Merry Meet again."

Merry Part, See Merry Meet

Merry Meet Again, See Merry Meet

Metaphysician: (met-a-physician) One who works with what we know of Metaphysics.

Metaphysicist: (Met-a-fizz-issist) One who studies Metaphysics by experimentation.

Metaphysics: (met-a-fizz-ix) In the context of Wicca and magick, that which is difficult to explain or has yet to be “proven,” magnetism and gravity used to be considered “metaphysics.”

Mickey Finn, Metaphysical: (met-a-fizz-ih-cul mick-ee fin.) To sneak a spell onto someone for their own good.

Microcosm: (mike-row-cos-um) The inner, immediate world, where magic is most effective.

Mirror Book: In the works of the late Scott Cunningham, a Mirror Book was a personal journal.

MM: Merry Meet

MMA: Merry Meet Again

Monotheism: The belief that there is only one god, whether that god is seen as the True God and others are seen or false, or all gods are actually a single god doesn't matter—it all gets down to the idea of one god. Contrary to the opinions of some, most Wiccans are not monotheists who see all gods as aspects of one force, but polytheists.

Moon Struck: To be dazzled, dazed and otherwise bewildered, causing one to act uncharacteristically.

Moral: (more-ahl) A rule of conduct.

Morality: That which corresponds to morals, a set of morals.

MP: Merry Part, good-bye.

Mundane, The: The secular and ordinary world.

Mystery: A members-only rite, in ancient faiths, by which one achieves the needed state to have a proper or pleasant afterlife. In Wicca, any members only rite which achieves the purpose of advancement within the circle or dedication to the gods.

Mystery faith: Any religion in which membership is dependant upon the participation in a mystery rite.

Mystic: (miss-tick) that which is unexplainable, one who practices that which is unexplainable.

Neo-Pagan: (knee-oh-pay-gan) Literally a "new pagan." Considered a slight bit of a slur in the Wiccan set, Neo-Pagan is a term often meaning "any one practicing a non-Christian religion I haven't heard of." Some argue that "neo-pagan" is appropriate to distinguish modern Pagans from ancient Pagans. Since ancient Pagans did not refer to themselves as "Pagan," and no group, not even the Reconstructionists, practice a purely ancient faith, this is a fairly silly concept.

New Age, The: Although now used by many to mean anything Pagan/Wiccan/Occult. New Age also serves as a slang term in the conservative Christian church to describe all they feel is humanist, childish and/or romantic, including angels, crystals, Tarot and even Wicca. Also, The Age "after" Aquarius.

Numerology: (new-mer-ol-oh-gee) Divining by breaking everything down into numbers.

Occult: (oh or uh-cult) That which cannot be seen or must be hidden, often, in modern usage, it means “New Age” or “Satanic.”

Oimlic: (oymlic or ohmlic) Imbolc.

Old Religion, The: One of the many terms used to mean Wicca. As Wicca is actually the new religion of old gods, this is an inaccurate term.

Ordains: A collection of laws and rules by which members of a Wiccan sect must abide. They may cover conduct outside the circle or just within it.

Pagan: (Pay-gan) Literally: Dweller in the country. Non-Christian. Specifically, a member of a non-revealed religion who self-identifies as such.

Palmistry: See Cheiromancy

Pantheon: (panth-ee-on) A group or family of Gods of a culture. A building in Rome, or any temple dedicated to a group of gods.

Patriarchy: (pay-tree-arc-ee) A “messed up” system where men are in charge and women are substandard. See Matriarchy.

Pattern Work: (Pat-urn wurk) Divination where logic and psychic powers are combined with visualization to discover an outcome.

Pentacle: (pen-ta-cle) A five pointed star portrayed three dimensionally, like a pendant or wax tablet. No modern culture has claim to using the pentacle “first.” In Wicca originally, one point up represented the

goddess and two points up represented the Horned God, but in the eyes of the less educated, Modern Satanists adopt Two-point pentacle, and Wicca holds the other. The difference today is largely cosmetic. The Pentacle has also been used by earlier Christians as a symbol of goodness or the wounds of Christ, so the concept of it as a satanic or anti-Christian symbol is modern and historically inaccurate.

Pentagram: A drawn or otherwise two dimensional pentacle.

Phoenix: (Fee-nix) 1.A mythological Firebird which burned itself out and was reborn, a popular dying king image. 2. One of the warriors of the Iliad.

Pict: (similar to: picked) Ancient peoples of The British Isles characterized by their small, stature and dark eyes/hair. Thought to be the basis for Pixies and sprites.

Polytheism: The worship of multiple gods. Although some Wiccans are monotheists, most are polytheists. More specifically, they are heno- and duo-theists.

Priest(ess): (pre-sst, pre-sstess) The leader of a coven or one who had dedicated their lives to Wicca.

Psyche: (sikey) A Goddess also, the part of the Self where the "mental" psychic powers (telepathy and the like) are said to be held.

Psychic: (sigh kick) One who has finely tuned their extra senses. Not to be confused with Physics, one of the sciences.

Pyromancy: (pie-row-mancy) Fire Magick

Reconstructionism: Religions and spiritual movements that attempt to recreate through historical observation where possible

and educated guess where not, the indigenous religions lost to history. Reconstructionism itself is not a religion, but a broad category of religions ranging from Asatru to Hellenic reconstruction and everything in-between. Where Wicca is a modern religion steeped in modern culture, Reconstructionist religions are attempts to recreate the culture specific religions of the past.

Rede: (reed) A filter, moral, or basic standard. Sometimes used to mean "law" but such usage is inexact. See Wiccan Rede; Wicca, Rede of the.

Regenerative: (re-jen-ur-A-tive) Giving refreshment or rebirth, re-energizing, recreating.

Reincarnation: (re-in car-nation) Being born again into a new body.

Relic: (Rel-ick) A physical item relating to something, often ancient. Religious relics include tools and the like. Artifact

Reverie: (Rev-er-ee) A state of intense relaxation necessary to the practice of Magick.

Right-Hand Path, The: path of total Selflessness, the Self-detrimental path of putting All else before the Self.

Ritual: (Rit-you-al) A sacred or repeated act, a Wiccan Mass.

Rune: (Roon) A symbol or letter, also a small piece of wood, stone or shell with a letter on it for rune casting.

Rune Casting: Picking Runes at random or tossing them as an act of divination.

Sabbat: (sah-bat or suh-bot) The eight main holidays, See Days of Power.

Sabbat(h): (sah-bath) See Sabbat

Sacred Marriage: See Great Rite.

Sacrifice: To give something up. In Wicca, we sacrifice Wine, food, money, trinkets, stones and time, but never, ever anything living.

Saffron: (saff-ron) A rare and sacred herb, also a fiery orange-yellow color.

Sage: (sayge) 1. An Herb. 2. One with great knowledge. 3. A male "crone."

Satan: (say-tan) A God of Evil in the Judeo-Christian Mythos who plays no part in Wicca.

Satanism: (say-tan-ism) A Judeo-Christian Religion worshipping the Judeo-Christian God of Evil, Satan. As far from Wicca as one can get.

Scry, To: (S'cry) To Look with non-mundane means.

Scrying: (S'cry-ing) A form of divination using reflective surfaces.

Seeker: (in UEW) A Third Circle member of Universal Eclectic Wicca whose job is discovery, often a Metaphysicist.

Self, Total: See Integrated Total Self.

Self, True: Very similar if not the same as ITS, that which controls Will.

Shaman: (shah-man or shay-man) A Priest or Spiritual leader of some indigenous religions. A few Wiccan Priest(esse)s are Shamans, (I know of only one,) but most Shamans are not Wiccan and most Wiccans are not Shamans. As a Wiccan with a way-back dash of Indigenous American blood, I get really steamed at both Wiccans who think that they are Shamans and Shamanists who think that Wiccans have "stolen" from their Religion.

So, here's my stand on the matter...First, What I tell my Native American friends: "WE preach and teach oneness with the land, and occasionally we reach it. Sometimes, a Wiccan gets out of hand and thinks that they actually are a Shaman...but that's not the majority. We have had to alter our religion for a new land, where the spirits are not the same as our indigenous lands. This is not an attempt to assimilate a culture."

Now, what I tell my other friends: "With everything else that's been taken, religion is all that Native Americans have to hold on to, by watching the perversion of their religion; they're watching the lifeblood of culture drain away. They have the right to be angry."

And now, my take: "All religion is personal, if we share truths then we should celebrate that. No one likes a fraud, and a Shaman who isn't what (s)he claims is a fraud. Let's help to fix the land, and try to preserve what's left of it from those who would do her more harm. The War isn't between us, but those who are defenders of The Mother and Father and those who stab them in the back. Religion is not an issue."

Shamanism: The Practice of a Shaman, also an incorrect catchphrase for all indigenous religions.

Shiela-na-gig: An often explicit goddess figure depicted on churches, said to have been originally carved by Pagans who told the church that they were to ward off "goblins" and the like.

Sickle: see Tools, Book One

Sigil: A personal seal or emblem with a punch of power, Seals of Gods and dead Mages are also in common usage.

Signatures, Doctrine of: Largely discounted theory on Herbalism by Christian monk, Jacob Boehme, who taught that the Abrahamic God marked every plant with a sign for its use. Thus, a Kidney shaped plant helped the kidneys, or a liver shaped plant the liver. The Doctrine of Signatures lives on in the name of several plants, like Liverwort, but as a highly Christian belief, inseparable from its core religion, it really has no point in Wicca.

Simple feast: The Cakes and Ale potion of a ritual.

Skyclad: Clad in sky, naked.

Skyrobe: The blue robe of a bard and some high druids.

Spell: The Magickal method by which one encharms and enchants. A short Magickal ritual.

Spiral: The Motion in and out of life, The double spiral, the double helix, DNA.

Spiral Dance, The: 1. The motion of The Cyclic Totality. 2. The Book by Starhawk considered one of the greatest tomes of Dianic Wicca. 3. A snake-like dance performed at some rituals

Spirituality: Beliefs, actions and more that enhance and feed the Spiritual part of the ITS.

Slyph: See Elementals, Paracelsus'

Sympathetic Magick: Like creating like. Doing a symbolic action to achieve a "real" action.

Synchronicity: (Singck-row-nic-it-ee) When everything “clicks.” the Study of Patterns. The Science of Sympathetic Magic.

Talisman: (tahl-is-man) Charm: Something worn with a Magickal property. Religious: A Symbol or item sacred for religious reasons. Totemic: A relic of your family/clan’s animal protector or your animal guide.

Tarologist: (tar-al-oh-gist) A tarot reader, Artist, diviner

Tarot: (Tarrow) A deck of cards used for divination

Thealogy: (Thea low gee) Feminine form of (the gender-neutral) term Theology

Theban Script: The so-called Witches Alphabet, a common type of writing used by “traditionalist” and Gardnerian Wiccans.

Thelema: (Thel-ih-ma, or Theh-lame-a)” Do what thou will shall be the Whole of the Law, Love is the Law, Love under Will” See 93, Crowley’s Law

Thelemite: (Thel-im-mite or Thelame-ite) What most Crowleyists PREFER to be called.

Theology: (The-al-o-gee) The study of Gods, religion and cultures effected by them.

Three-Fold Law, The: A variation of the Law of Return where the retribution ratio is 3 to 1.

Three Paths, The: The three choices we are given in “how to live.” See Left Hand Path, Right Hand Path, Center Path.

Touched by the Gods: Insane.

Trad: Tradition

Tradition: A sect of Wicca and some other forms of Paganism. The use of tradition as "sect" is not a new use, nor is "new tradition" an oxymoron.

Tree of Life, the: A diagram representing the All in Kabbalah, also the companion tree to the Tree of knowledge in the "Adam and Eve" Myth. Also Yggdrasil. The name for agave and a number of other "trees"

Triformis: (Try-form-is) The Triple Goddess concept, often Hecate, Selune and Diana/Artemis. Rare. Often, Triformis is not portrayed as one goddess but three distinct figures that reflect the three stages of life. Triformis is often portrayed as maiden, mother and crone, but also is represented by daughter, wife and whore.

Trump: A single card of the major Arcana.

Trump, To: (As a die-hard fan of the late Roger Zelazny's Amber novels, I nearly fainted when someone used this word this way in front of me, although that person had never read a single Amber book, I know that Amber MUST be from whence this came.) To use a Tarot Card (or picture) as a focus for telepathic communication, also called "Photomentalism" or "Photopathy."

UFOlogist: (you-eff-al-o-gist) One who studies UFO's.

Uncle Al: Aleister Crowley, slang.

Undine: See Elementals, Paracelsus'

Underworld: Hell, Hades, the “waiting room” of the after life, this varies from culture to culture.

Vibes: From vibration, perceived “Feelings” off of someone/something... “good vibes” “bad vibes.”

Visualization: Pictures and sensations created in the mind.

Walpurgisnacht: (Varies: Val-pur-gis-noct) The night before Beltane

Warlock: What you should never call a male Wiccan. It means “Oath-breaker.” There is a small movement to “reclaim” the word. Like Witch, this word never historically meant a positive thing, but those claiming the word, and giving it a new meaning, have as much a right to do so as any group seeking to redefine a word.

Watchtowers: In The “Enochian” Magickal tradition founded by John Dee, the “ultimate” of each direction. These Watchtowers, of the four compass points, each house, or are ruled by, an Abrahamic “Archangel.” I am very uncomfortable with incorporation of Enochiana into Wicca by the non-initiate of the Enochian path.

Way of The Wise: Another term for Wicca, and also for Witchcraft.

Webweaving: “Witchy” and Feminist term for Networking

WFEC/WFECs: Wiccan-Flavored Ex-Christianity, Wiccan-Flavored Ex-Christians. See “Ex-Christianity”

Wicca: (wick-ah, weesh-a, Vee-ka) Wicca is the Religion this book is about, also the masculine singular form of a word for “Witch.” Like fish, folk, or deer, the plural of Wicca, used in this form is “Wicca” as in “One of the Wicca.” It may be used as a synonym for “Witchcraft” but

all Witches are not Wiccan, and all Wiccans do not use the term "Witch."

Wicce: (Wich, wick-eh, Vee-sh) Wicce is the feminine singular of a word for "Witch." Like fish, folk, or deer, the feminine plural of Wicce, used in this form is "Wicce" as in "Sisterhood of the Wicce."

Wicca Craft: Another term for Wicca

Wicca, Rede of The: Faith poem of a specific tradition often confused with the eight word long Wiccan rede. The use of "Wicca" to indicate plurality is unique to this poem (by A.Porter) and tradition specific. Wicca, is, of course, a masculine singular when used to indicate a person, so the use of a Latin feminine plural, while interesting and valid, is certainly not historical or ancient.

Wiccan: (Wick-en) Of the religion of Wicca. A Practioner of the Religion of Wicca.

Wiccan Laws: see "Ordains"

Wiccan Rede: "An it harm none, do as you will."

Wicklier-than-thou: The Wiccan Equivalent of "holier than thou," someone playing games of one-upmanship.

Widdershins: Counterclockwise.

Will The: Force of Self, the "fuel" of Magick.

Witch: A term for a Wiccan but also a term for practioners of Familial Magickal Traditions (FMT) and practioners of all forms of magick, including ceremonial magick. Some Satanists use the term to describe themselves, as well, and they have as much right to as any Wiccan.

Witchcraft: The “craft” of any person or group referring to themselves as Witches.

Witchcraft, Operative: One of Margaret Murray’s two forms of Witchcraft, operative witchcraft is the non-religious practice of spells, charms, divination, invocations and evocations, as opposed to the practice of religion. Wicca is **NOT** Operative Witchcraft, though many Wiccans practice forms of operative Witchcraft.

Witchcraft, Ritual: (See Witchcraft, Operative) Ritual Witchcraft is the term Margaret Murray used for those practices common to Wicca, the celebration of the gods and cycle of the seasons. Wicca is one type of Ritual Witchcraft of many.

Witch War: A dispute between coven leaders, very often silly things with episodes of “I’m gonna ward you right off this plane.” No real, self-respecting Wiccan over the age of four participates in one.

Wort Cunning: Literally: Herb knowledge.

Xtian/Xian: (ex-jin) Abbreviation for Christian. The Earliest use of which I’ve found was in a reprint of one of H.P.Blavatsky’s writings. Used even today in Christian schools and in the writings of many Greek monks, Xian is not, and has never been anything but an abbreviation. It is not an offense to Christianity save by those who are offended by other Christians.

Yggdrasil: (varies:igg dra-sil) The Scandinavian Tree of Life that holds everything together.

93: (ninety-three) The Number of the Word of the Law that is Thelema, used as a greeting by on-line Crowleyists and people who want to solicit a “huh?”

Book Five:

Appendices and Helps

The Contents of this section of this book are eclectic in their own right. When I created the four categories that became the books within All One Wicca, these things fell into the category of "None of the above."

- A: Journal Ponderances
- B: The Constitution of the United States of America
- C: Amendments to the Constitution
- D: Registering to vote
- E: The Principles of Wiccan Belief
- F: The complete Charter of Religion:Other, The New York Pagan Alliance
- G: Two Versions of The Charge of The Goddess and a Charge of The God
- H: Internet Resource Guide
- I: 50 Basic Concepts a UEW Wiccan Learns in the First and Second Circle

Appendix A: Journal Ponderances

These fifty-two journal ponderances, if written about one a week for a year in the journal, will either make you insane, or turn you into an essayist, not that there is a big difference. The main point of these topics is to give you something to write about when you are stuck, to help you train your mind to challenge reality in your writing.

- #1: What color eyes does the God/Goddess have? Why? Why can't you answer this question if you can't?
- #2: Find a new meaning for the word "Oxymoron."
- #3: What sound does starlight make?
- #4: If you could defy gravity at will, what would you do?
- #5: Define "Blue."
- #6: Describe, using as few words as possible, what Wiccan is.
- #7: Write a freeform poem about your foot.
- #8: Read your last journal entry, contradict it
- #9: Is it just that the Gods have run out of extras in you life? Or is that man everywhere you go?
- #10: What would the ideal civilization be?
- #11: If the government had to hold a bakesale to buy a bomber, and had the best brownies in the world, would you buy one?
- #12: What if dogs really are that stupid? What if cats are smarter than us?
- #13: What if the world really isn't round?
- #14: What animal would you like to be?
- #15: If we could understand the dolphin, what would it tell us?

- #16: How does/would Christ feel about Christianity?
- #17: If you walk around a corner, and bumped into your favorite Wiccan author, especially a dead one...what would you say?
- #18: Tell the biggest lie in the world.
- #19: Visualize World Piece (Yes, that's spelled right).
- #20: It can't be that bad...can it?
- #21: Write a short story about yourself, don't use the words I, You, me, they, myself or your name.
- #21: What is the sound of one hand clapping, played backwards through a midi-capable synthesizer with echo and distort?
- #22: Why does Awful mean awful?
- #23: Who invented Bacon?
- #24: If all the really horrible criminals have middle names, maybe we shouldn't give middle names to our children.
- #25: Acciw is Wicca spelled backwards.
- #26: What is the meaning of tree?
- #27: What if all electricity stopped working?
- #28: Poof! you no longer are human...what are you?
- #29: Is there life on other planets?
- #30: Why is "light?"
- #31: If you found out you were wrong, what would you say to the Christian God?
- #32: What do you call a Merry-go-round full of screaming kids?
- #33: Contemplate immortality.
- #34: If I won a billion dollars, I would....
- #35: Write a poem about clouds.
- #36: Answer the question. "why?"
- #37: Answer the question "why?" This time, don't use the word "because."
- #38: You have all the authors of all the books on Wicca and Metaphysics of the past Two Hundred years gathered around a table. What are they doing, and who wins the food fight?
- #39: What is the point of pointing?
- #40: Maybe you're dreaming.

- #41: Maybe someone else is dreaming.
- #42: The world is going to end in 3.5 seconds.
- #43: What does love feel like (don't use words that are emotions, or body parts.)
- #44: Write a poem about a man walking through a wasteland, from a buzzard's point of view.
- #45: What would the Environmentalists say if we discovered that a new endangered species, the dragon, was terrorizing cities?
- #46: What if Hitler won World War Two?
- #47: What if you were teleported into Salem, 1692, on Gallows Hill?
- #48: Would the King've noticed his daughter's disappearances if they'd worn out tennis shoes instead of dancing shoes?
- #49: An act of Gods, War and law makes you Queen/King of England...
- #50: It was a dark and stormy night.
- #51: Begin a short story with "I will never forget the time I..." Finish it with "cheesecake."
- #52: Describe chocolate.

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Appendix B:

The Constitution of The United States of America

It is impossible for an American Wiccan to be fully secure in his knowledge of his/her rights under the law in the United States without knowledge of the Constitution. I wish could say that I'd never heard an anti-whatever group attempt to abuse the Constitution out there, but the fact is, if you don't know your rights, you've already given at least one right away. Learn this, memorize it, thump it harder than a Bible thumper thumps his Bible. This is the shared "religion" of The United States. As I am fascinated with language, I've left alone the seemingly random capitalization of the Constitution, and maintained many of the spellings used in the original.

Constitution of the United States

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article I

Section 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature. No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the age of twenty five Years, and been seven years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

Section 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall chuse their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside:

And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of Honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law.

Section 4. The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

Section 5. Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

Section 6. The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been encreased during such time: and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

Section 7. All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by Yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and

against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

Section 8. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States; To borrow Money on the credit of the United States; To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes; To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States; To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures; To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States; To establish Post Offices and post Roads; To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries; To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court; To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences against the Law of Nations; To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water; To raise and support Armies, but no

Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years; To provide and maintain a Navy; To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces; To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions; To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress; To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards, and other needful Buildings;—And To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Section 9. The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or Enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

Section 10. No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Control of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

Article II

Section 1. The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of

them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be encreased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not

receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section 2. The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

Section 3. He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Section 4. The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Article III

Section 1. The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

Section 2. The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority;—to all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls;—to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction;—to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party;—to Controversies between two or more States;—between a State and Citizens of another State;—between Citizens of different States;—between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of

different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects.

In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The Trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment, shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

Section 3. Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted.

Article IV

Section 1. Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records, and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

Section 2. The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States. A Person charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime.

No Person held to Service or Labor in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labor, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labor may be due.

Section 3. New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new States shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

Section 4. The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence.

Article V

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.

Article VI

All Debts contracted and Engagements entered into, before the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no

religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

Article VII

The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same. Done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the Twelfth

In witness whereof We have hereunto subscribed our Names,

George Washington—President and deputy from Virginia

New Hampshire: John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman

Massachusetts: Nathaniel Gorham, Rufus King

Connecticut: William Samuel Johnson, Roger Sherman

New York: Alexander Hamilton

New Jersey: William Livingston, David Brearly, William Paterson, Jonathan Dayton

Pennsylvania: Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Mifflin, Robert Morris, George Clymer, Thomas FitzSimons, Jared Ingersoll, James Wilson, Gouverneur Morris

Delaware: George Read, Gunning Bedford, Jr., John Dickinson, Richard Bassett, Jacob Broom

Maryland: James McHenry, Daniel of Saint Thomas Jenifer, Daniel Carroll

Virginia: John Blair, James Madison, Jr.

North Carolina: William Blount, Richard Dobbs Spaight, Hugh Williamson

South Carolina: John Rutledge, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Charles Pinckney, Pierce Butler

Georgia: William Few, Abraham Baldwin

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Appendix C: Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported

by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense.

Amendment VII

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Amendment XI

The Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by Citizens of another State, or by Citizens or Subjects of any Foreign State.

Amendment XII

The Electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—the person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from

each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.—The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

Amendment XIII

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XIV

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the

right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

Section 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

Section 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

Section 5. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Amendment XV

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XVI

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census of enumeration.

Amendment XVII

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, That the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

Amendment XVIII

Section 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Section 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the

several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XIX

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XX

Section 1. The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

Section 2. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

Section 3. If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.

Section 4. The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from

whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

Section 5. Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

Section 6. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

Amendment XXI

Section 1. The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

Section 2. The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the

Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XXII

Section 1. No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

Section 2. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths

of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

Amendment XXIII

Section 1. The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct: A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XXIV

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XXV

Section 1. In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

Section 2. Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

Section 3. Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his

written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

Section 4. Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

Amendment XXVI

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of age.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XXVII

No law, varying the compensation for the service of the senators and representatives shall take effect, until an election of representatives shall have intervened.

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Appendix D: Registering to Vote.

Change the system! Obey just laws, change unjust ones! The power is yours! If you are a US citizen eighteen years of age or older, you have a part in the decision making processes of the United States. Although thousands fought for the right to vote at that age, many young people chose not to vote, feeling that they can "do nothing" about the problems out there. Environmentalism, Religious Unity and respect, personal freedom and all of the Rights you hold dear depend on the vote of each and every person. Religious persecution of Wiccans in the United States is a very real phenomenon, with people such as Bob Barr attempting to remove our right to serve in the Armed Forces. Such legislation was shot down but only because of the many people who voted rational persons into office. Call your local board of registrations, or 1-800-FOR VOTE for more information on where and how to vote. It's easier than you think.

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Appendix E:

The Principles of Wiccan Belief

The Principles of Wiccan Belief were set down in 1974 by a group called "The Council of American Witches" at a meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The statement, which has far outlived the group, has been reprinted in almost every major book on American Wicca.

"The Council of American Witches finds it necessary to define modern Witchcraft in terms of American experience and needs. We are not bound by traditions from other times and other cultures, and owe no allegiance to any person or power greater than the Divinity manifest through our own being.

As American Witches, we welcome and respect all life-affirming teachings and traditions, and seek to learn from all and to share our learning within our Council.

It is in this spirit of welcome and cooperation that we adopt these few principles of Wiccan belief. In seeking to be inclusive, we do not wish to open ourselves to the destruction of our group by those on self-serving power trips, or to philosophies and practices contradictory to these principles. In seeking to exclude those whose ways are contradictory to ours, we do not want to deny participation with us to any who are sincerely interested in our knowledge and beliefs, regardless of race, color, sex, age, national or cultural origins, or sexual preference.

We therefore ask only that those who seek to identify with us accept these few basic principles:

1. We practice rites to attune ourselves with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by the phases of the Moon and the seasonal quarters and cross-quarters.
2. We recognize that our intelligence gives us a unique responsibility toward our environment. We seek to live in harmony with Nature, in ecological balance offering fulfillment to life and consciousness within an evolutionary concept.
3. We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than is apparent to the average person. Because it is far greater than ordinary, it is sometimes called "supernatural," but we see it as lying within that which is naturally potential to all.
4. We conceive of the Creative Power in the Universe as manifesting through polarity—as masculine and feminine—and that this same creative Power lives in all people, and functions through the interaction of the masculine and feminine. We value neither above the other, knowing each to be supportive of the other. We value sexuality as pleasure, as the symbol and embodiment of Life, and as one of the sources of energies used in Magickal practice and religious worship.
5. We recognize both outer worlds and inner, or psychological worlds—sometimes known as the Spiritual World, the Collective Unconscious, the Inner Planes, etc.—and we see in the interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal phenomenon and Magickal exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfillment.
6. We do not recognize any authoritarian hierarchy, but do honor those who teach, respect those who share their greater knowledge and wisdom, and acknowledge those who have courageously given of themselves in leadership.
7. We see religion, Magick, and wisdom-in-living as being united in the way one views the world and live within it—a world view and a philosophy of life, which we identify as Witchcraft or the Wiccan Way.

8. Calling oneself "Witch" does not make a Witch—but neither does heredity itself, or the collecting of titles, degrees, and initiations. A Witch seeks to control the forces within him/herself that make life possible in order to live wisely and well, without harm to others, and in harmony with Nature.
9. We acknowledge that it is the affirmation and fulfillment of life, in a continuation of evolution and development of consciousness, that gives meaning to the Universe we know, and to our personal role within it.
10. Our only animosity toward Christianity, or toward any other religion or philosophy-of-life, is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be "the one true right and only way" and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress other ways of religious practices and belief.
11. As American Witches, we are not threatened by debates on the history of the Craft, the origins of various terms, the legitimacy of various aspects of different traditions. We are concerned with our present, and our future.
12. We do not accept the concept of "absolute evil," nor do we worship any entity known as "Satan" or "the Devil" as defined by Christian tradition. We do not seek power through the suffering of others, nor do we accept the concept that personal benefits can only be derived by denial to another.
13. We work within Nature for that which is contributory to our health and well-being.

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Appendix F:

The Full Charter and Rules of Religion: Other, The New York Pagan Alliance.

Religion: Other was the first organization I ran, a collection of Pagans from various traditions in the Central New York Area. While now defunct, in part because my own move from New York State made the group fall apart, Religion: Other's charter has long stood as the prototype other groups have used for their own charter or bylaws, and was a strong part of the creation of official bylaws for the Church of UEW. It is presented here as an example of a faith-based charter for historical and research purposes.

Religion:Other Code of ethics and charter:

Religion:Other, An Alliance of Alternative Religion, is an organization designed to fit the special needs of Wiccans, Druids, and other Pagans in an increasingly hostile world. We are run by a democratic council of Pagans who strive to keep our rules just and protective, while being as unrestrictive as possible. Our organization encompasses both individuals and groups, and does not endorse any particular thought or religious belief other than the sanctity of our religious freedom.

Religion:Other has four main purposes, the first being the legal protection of Pagans and Paganism and continuing defense of our First Amendment Rights, the second being the protection of Pagans and

Non-Pagans from dangerous or fraudulent educators or clergy, the third being the education of the Non-Pagan community as to what Paganism is and what pagans do, and our fourth, and most important reason for existing, easy, accessible and safe education for both secular Pagans and would be clergy.

While we do not promote one view of Paganism, all groups and educators represented and endorsed by us must follow a basic set of rules and code of ethics, or risk losing all protection, representation and student access. Individuals are encouraged to report infractions and complaints to us, if these complaints are found to be truthful after investigation, Religion:Other will take action against the individual or organization, included, but not limited to, involving the police or filing a class action.

These rules/Ethics are:

#1: All groups represented by RO must follow the Wiccan Rede: "An it harm none, do as you will," whether Wiccan or not. This includes not only physical harm to individual people, but "Brainwashing," body altering, and animal sacrifice.

#2: No group represented by RO may charge education fees, or any fees beyond supply fees (supply fees include rent of a space to hold meetings, candles, food and books, but NOT advertising.) Likewise, no group represented by RO may designate a store or crafter from whom supplies MUST be bought. The sole exception to this are groups belonging to larger, national or international organizations, these groups should charge the minimum possible to cover membership fees, or nothing if no fees exist.(Addendum to Article 2:4/1/94: Groups charging fees and putting those fees visibly back into their religion are hereby excluded from statement one of article 2 provided that exceptions are made for those unable to pay any said fees.)

(Addendum#2, Article2, 1/1/95: Classes not relating directly to the religious practices have never been included under article #2)

#3: All groups represented by RO must exclude minors from religious activities unless the parent or guardian accompanies the minor or

gives written consent for the minor to attend. Rituals at which people under the age of eighteen are present may not be performed "Skyclad." (Addendum to article 3:1/1/95 Minors may attend Skyclad rituals if the minor, the minor's parent(s) or guardian(s) and the entirety of the group give written consent...It is still not recommended.)

#4. If the priest or priestess of a group is under the age of eighteen, he or she must be supervised by a person of at least twenty-one years of age.

#5. If the leader of a group has say over the personal lives of his/her followers beyond the realm of advice, or should claim to be a messiah, re-incarnation of a god or person, or super-human and demand worship, RO will NOT, under any circumstances, refer people to, protect, advertise or in any way endorse said group.

#6. RO will not endorse or represent groups that demand that its members go Skyclad, demand oaths of fealty or obedience, or expect sexual favors from its members, including those groups that expect members to be involved with sexual rites to "advance" within the circle. Likewise groups demanding self-or other-mutilation (i.e.: tattoos, body piercing) or drug use, cannot be endorsed or represented.

#7. Sexual rites must be consented to by both parties; a minor, under law, cannot give consent. Such rites may not be attended by minors, and any participation by anyone must be voluntary, without penalty for those who choose not to attend.

#8. Represented groups may not discriminate on ANY BASIS, including sexual orientation, age (see #3,) race, religion (those opposing an organization or educator's views in an obstructive or offensive manner should be asked to leave,) political ideals, past religious history, or sex (unless the organization advertises as women only or men only, with no exclusion of those who may have started life with another, no, or both gender(s).)

#9. RO will represent only Pagan organizations as being non-Judeo-Christian, as such, no organization basing its beliefs on a Christian Mythos, including Satanism, will be represented. (addendum to Article 9-1/1/95: Pagan Christian organizations and Pagan Judeo

organizations will be endorsed on a group by group basis if all other articles apply and the President, VP and Representative of said group's area agree upon said representation and endorsement)

#10 (Amended 1/1/95) Those groups whose purpose is to convert, or who preach an "Only way" and do not extend basic respect to those whom they disagree with will be excluded from RO's membership. We believe such actions to be contrary to The Wiccan Rede and thus contrary to Article #1.

Individual's rights within Religion:Other:

#1: Your name, address and other information will not be revealed to ANYONE except RO staff members.

#2: If a referral is made by another group or individual, that group or individual's name will be included on your initial contact form.

#3. If you refer yourself to another organization or an instructor through us, we will call that organization or instructor and ask permission to give you their number to keep your own number private. Likewise, you may ask an instructor or individual to send mail to RO, we will then place it in a plain envelope and send it to you.

#4. If you make a complaint about someone RO endorses, it will be investigated and acted upon while you remain anonymous.

#5. If someone makes a complaint about you, you will be informed of the complaint, but not the complainer (until such time as mediation occurs).

#6. If asked, RO will inform you of the number of complaints an organization or educator has received, and the status of those complaints.

Any RO staff member breaking these rules will be removed from duty.

(As signed by Kat MacMorgan and witnessed by Carol Douglas, on 3 January 1994, excluding addendums dated later than said date.)

Rules of representation:(Affective 1/1/96)

The Council shall be composed of The President, The Vice President, the Representative of each area, Leaders of Covens/Groves/groups

numbering over 25 and "Welcomed" elders, those being Priests, teachers, and others of any age invited to join by a majority vote. If, for some reason, a Council member has a severe objection to the inclusion of an "elder" he/she has rights of refusal provided "just cause" can be shown. Just Cause includes breaking of, or inability to uphold the Charter. Members of one group, Organization or tradition MAY NOT make up more than 1/4 of the Council. An additional representative from each state may be included until such time as RO goes National. The President and Vice President may not hold office in any other organizations beyond their own coven or tradition if that office would cause their decisions to be affected or swayed by the hierarchy of another group. The President of the organization shall be the person who does the work, such as calling and forming the council, and shall be replaced by a person elected by the council if at any time (s)he cannot perform his/her duties effectively. The replacement must have MEANS to keep the organization going and spend at least 10 hours a week working for RO.

The Vice President is elected every year and a day by council vote. Every Member of the Council has equal voting and veto power. The council must meet once a year, but votes must be conducted by the President when needed, either by mail, e-mail, telephone or meeting. The Newsletter is separate from the Council, and does not affect and is not affected by the council.

Area Representatives are those who choose to be RO's contact person for an area extending no more than 50 square miles and no less than 10, (UPSTATE) or representing 100 to 500 people (downstate) this person must make themselves publicly accessible. Initial Representatives, (those on the 1st council) can choose to become representatives if they know at least 10 people and are willing to distribute flyers and make themselves accessible...the voting rules for Representatives are up to that area...each council, or group in an area is encouraged to come up with their own method of election.

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Appendix G: Two Versions of The Charge of The Goddess and one of The God:

The Charge of The Goddess:

This modern version was written by Kat MacMorgan and Lady Martia of Bell Coven. It is a very Good eclectic version of the Charge, saying many of the same things as more standard versions (Such as those based on Leland's Aradia) in plain "American" English, with much of the tradition specific material removed. For many people, memorizing the words of a Charge is more important than what the words say. Just as schools long since abandoned rote teaching because it was soon forgotten, you should read what is said-the intention-not "the words":

Behold! I am she who is the great Mother, known to all who worship me by names both spoken and unspoken. I am she who brings love, and warmth, and the breath of Life. Breathe deep and be holy.

Bring to me your troubles, your desires. Assemble before where and when you may, better still before the full moon, bringing love, light and a desire to do good, for I am the Mother of All, and shall turn none who has need of me away.

Gaze upon the moon and you gaze upon my face, for I am the Bringer of light, the keeper of justice, the catalyst of the cycles and she who is vengeance. Know me by the face you show me, for as you are to me, I shall be to you.

Strive, for you are vested with the powers of infinite growth.

Be free, for all enslaved need merely look upon me, hold out a hand and be unhindered.

Harm none, for all is your brother, all is your sister. Think, and know the purpose of each creature and plant. Destroy nothing in service to me, Create to honor me!

You who have need of inner peace, find it reflected within.

You who have need of outer strength, find it in my service.

You who have need of healing, if it is needed, it shall come.

You who have need of forgiveness, find it first within and then shall I aid you.

You who has fear, look upon the light of the moon and know you are never alone.

You who have been harmed, look upon me and know that vengeance shall be thrice the harm you have received.

For great and eternal is my love, and greater that for my children who have looked into my face. As I was in the beginning, shall I be in the end, and none of my children need fear death, for when time is come, it is to my bosom you are clasped, that your heart beat with mine, clothed in love.

There are several major differences between this and the common versions. "And to show ye are truly free of slavery, ye shall be naked in thy rights" (From a traditionalist version,) has been removed. When it was written, by traditionalists, translated from a word that, in Aradia, speaks more of not hiding anything than tromping around nude, this was fine. I attend most rights clothed, never has She denied me. The Goddess loves unconditionally, and She can see through clothing, we interpret "naked" as free from "masks" the Goddess is shown your True Self. Also statements which we have perceived as "demanding," namely you must and you shall type statements. Our Goddess demands nothing!!! She encourages us toward freedom, and

tells us, that when we fall she shall lift us up and brush us off. Our lessons, we are told, are ours to learn.

The Charge of The Moon Goddess:

This is often used in conjunction with the above piece.

Behold, I am she who shines above, Selene, Luna, Moon. I bring light and love to all who attend. Attend my words, for they are the words of elder and youth, the words formed on the very breath with which the first mother kissed her child. Listen, and be one.

"Harm none I have told you, and well you have done in holding by it, but I charge you further to Harm not, not yourself, nor the air, nor that which you can live without harming. Behold, before the all mother all things are equal, and all things have purpose. Know harm, know purpose. Why cut down a tree when you could tread on the grass, why tread on the grass when you could walk on the sand? Why pick the finest apple on the branch when fresh wind-fall is delivered into your lap?

For I am the mother of all, she who breathes purpose into each creature's mouth as they are born. Behold, I am the breath of life, and I can be the agent of death, for purpose is two sided, and those that destroy in the name of creation shall be punished as they punish. I am She who is the hand of death, and I take from the dying their purpose that they pass within unbound into the realms of shadow. I am the light within Shadow.

Respect those that went before but do not try to remake the past. All is a cycle, and we are within the infancy of the great life that is the life of the Wicca. Thousands of years will pass, Wicca will grow and change and falter and stumble, but the last breath is the first breath, and at its darkest moment Wicca will be born anew once more.

Grow! I charge you, do not age behind walls against the world, you are the children of the Moon, Shine!

Learn! I charge you, do not sit on what you know in the hopes that it will hatch like an egg. Reap, but sow and reap again. Create!

Love! As I love, without secrets or threats, do what is right, for no love is evil. Do no evil in love, and love all as you love yourself, for we do not harm what we truly love save when harm is unstoppable. Harm none!

Be! Let the shackles fall, you are free and you can do all! As the being grows, so the Will shines! As you learn, so your Will creates, as you love, your Will cannot harm. As you Be, so you Are!

I am you, we are one, your breath carries the same purpose as mine, if hidden to you! Breathe and know that creation is yours! Love all, Know purpose and Harm none,

Live life full of wonder, joy, and know that light is always there, even if hidden within the shadows.

The Charge of the God:

This somewhat unusual thing comes from Wolf Moon Wicca, the All Male Trad I've spoken of, and is printed here with the express consent of its author. We've used this in a few rites quite successfully, and this is a very inspirational piece of writing.

I am The Father, The Sun, the God of the Wicca, hear my words that you may grow.

Blessed are all, and given freedom, be assured that none who live true shall be fettered, that none who cause no harm shall be harmed save those harms done which teach.

I am the Teacher of all, seek within me and you shall find all you seek. Know me in the Eagle and the Antelope, if you desire to soar, the lesson may be sought from the creatures of the wing, if you wish to seek, watch the hunter, if you wish to hide, watch the jackrabbit and the fawn. Learn from what you have been given and the lessons will be learned swiftly and never need reteaching.

I am your father, what need have I of proof of loyalty, merely being here and hearing this tells me that you are of the true. Great indeed is your love!

Take my hand, walk through the forests and cities, look within and without and I shall be revealed. What you ask shall be yours.

Appendix H: Internet Resource Guide

All of these resources have been screened for excellent and accurate content. There is no assurance that these links will still be operational, but most have existed for quite a while and are expected to last a while. There are literally thousands of Wiccan links out there, so this brief list is hardly a comprehensive one.

By Kaatryn MacMorgan:

All One Wicca: Internet Edition-<http://book.cuew.org>

Church of Universal Eclectic Wicca Homepage-<http://www.cuew.org>

Coven of The Far Flung Net-<http://coven.cuew.org>

UEW Pages and the homepages of UEW Covens and People:

Bell Tower Coven of Wicca-<http://btcw.homestead.com/>

Golden Pentagram Webring-

<http://www.ringsurf.com/netring?ring=goldpent;action=info>

Hollis' Hearth-

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Marble/4889/index.html>

Melissa's BlessedBee.net-<http://www.blessedbee.net/>

Trad Profile@Witchvox-

http://www.witchvox.com/trads/trad_uew.html

Tessa Marchand's "Complete Kat MacMorgan Links"-

<http://home.talkcity.com/GaiaWay/ladykaat/index.html>

Wyrnstar's Abode-<http://www.angelfire.com/rant/ingwitch/>

Wicca in general:

The Ranting Witches-<http://rw.faithweb.com/>

The Witches' Voice-<http://www.witchvox.com/>

Appendix I:

50 Basic Concepts a UEW Wiccan Learns in the First and Second Circles.

This is a shortened version of the UEW basic syllabus followed by most teachers. This book has touched, in part, on all of these points, and more information on them can be found on the Internet. If you'd like, you may use this list as a guideline for your own learning. If you feel you did not get enough information here to understand a point, try looking for more information on the 'net with the resource guide.

1. The Affirmation of Acknowledgement
2. The Five Points of Wiccan Belief
3. The Wiccan Rede Vs. The Rede of the Wiccae
4. Why the Wiccan Rede does not mean "harm none."
5. The History of Wicca, a Modern Faith.
6. Wicca is not Reconstructionist (or Celtic).
7. Myths about Wicca Spread by Some Wiccans and why.
8. Myths about Wicca spread by non-Wiccans and why.
9. Wicca compared to Abrahamic religions.
10. Wicca compared to Reconstructionist Religions.
11. Monotheism, Polytheism, Henotheism
12. Pantheons
13. Respecting the cultural rites of others while remaining Eclectic.

14. Basic Ethics
15. Visualization and Meditation
16. Prayer and dedication
17. Spiritual Regimens
18. The difference between Dogma and Doctrine.
19. "Casting" a circle.
20. Hubris, in others and ourselves.
21. Symbols of Modern Wicca and their historical usage.
22. Wicca and Science.
23. Rationality in the face of fantasy.
24. The Metaphoric History of Wicca
25. The symbolism of the Full Moon and the various attributes given the moon in different cultures.
26. Angels: Christian constructs. Their appeal, and why most Wiccans reject them.
27. Why responsible Wiccans do not teach minors without consent.
28. The 8 common Wiccan Holidays
29. Additional Wiccan Holidays
30. Rites of Passage
31. Death: Various beliefs within Wicca and other faiths.
32. The Law of Return and Chaos Theory
33. The Lessons of Evolution
34. Mystery rites: Historic and Modern
35. Dedication Vs Initiation and why "self-initiation" is an Oxymoron.
36. The Homeric Hymn to Demeter: An example of the founding myth of a mystery.
37. The heroic journey and its transport into Wicca
38. Magic as intentional action
39. Situational ethics
40. The history of UEW as a tradition
41. The terminology of comparative theology
42. Wicca observed as reactionary feminism
43. Extreme Ex-Christianity as a dangerous movement within some Wicca

44. Historic Dangerous cults: Why Wicca is not one and how to keep it that way.
45. Incorporating Wicca into every day.
46. The paths of the Third Circle
47. What is Ordination?
48. The difference between ignorance and harassment
49. Your legal rights as a citizen of your country
50. Actual persecution of Wiccans in the United States (case studies: Bob Barr, Jesse Helms, etc.)

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Unfortunately, much of the information I gathered came from people, not books.

While this is great for me, it makes it difficult for readers who want to learn more. The following people/groups were particularly helpful:

My wife, Phoenix and our beautiful son, Amy and Niki S., Ocean, Peace and their parents, who are real killer surfers, dude. Everyone at the following covens: Silver Chalice, Wolf Moon, New Tara, Black Water (all three incarnations), MacMorgan Covenstead, Far Flung Net and the like. The Marchand family. "Aunt" Sarah Morgan and the other Morgan Fam-Trad ladies (I hope we are related by more than name, Sar.) The real La Grace Family. The MacLeod brothers (Who aren't immortal) and Elaine. Lady Jayne, who rejected "Tomasian Wicca." as the name of our trad, her brother, Logan (Hm? Same name as my son...must be a coincidence.). David M. The gang of Witches in Salem on Samhain, 1992 (...remember when they threatened to arrest us...in Salem...on Samhain? Must've been the Ewe.) That includes everyone looking for the "warm, empty, open" DONUT CHAIN and chanting "Christians and Catholics and Jews, oh my!" Eric and Jen Bunce and all the other friends misplaced since I last played human pylon so Phoenix could park the Pagan mobile in front of the Essex so my poor arthritic knees would have some peace.

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